

# **2007 AmeriCorps REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**



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**APPLICATIONS DUE OCTOBER 27, 2006**

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**CALIFORNIA SERVICE CORPS**  
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# ***The AmeriCorps Pledge***

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***I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter and healthier.***

***I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.***

***Faced with apathy, I will take action.***

***Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.***

***Faced with adversity, I will persevere.***

***I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.***

***I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.***

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# CALIFORNIA SERVICE CORPS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
Governor

MARIA SHRIVER  
Honorary Chair

KAREN BAKER  
Executive Director

September 11, 2006

Dear AmeriCorps Applicants,

The California Service Corps (CSC) is pleased to announce the availability of grant funding to support partnerships that will engage individuals in addressing unmet community needs throughout California.

CSC last issued an AmeriCorps Request for Applications (RFA) in October 2005. The intervening year has brought a number of changes at both the state and national level. In California, CSC has added a new cohort of programs to our statewide portfolio and is continuing to work with all of our grantees to implement new AmeriCorps regulations announced last year. AmeriCorps' parent agency, the federal Corporation for National and Community Service ("the Corporation"), has issued a five-year strategic plan outlining its four focus areas for 2006-2010. The Corporation has also announced its goal of expanding the number of Americans who volunteer from 65.4 million to 75 million by the year 2010.

We recommend that our applicants for 2007 AmeriCorps funding take note of several key differences between this document and the RFA released last fall:

- Unlike previous years, this RFA does not include state funding priorities. CSC is interested in programs that meet a wide variety of locally identified community needs.
- To meet the Corporation's deadline for its 2007 national competition, CSC will be conducting in-person staff interviews in late November and early December. Preliminary funding announcements will be issued in mid-December.
- In order to align our grantmaking process more closely with that of the Corporation, we have modified the application format to focus more on the written narrative and less on supplemental charts and tables.
- The new AmeriCorps rule includes a number of new requirements, including those governing program evaluation. To meet this requirement, applicants responding to this RFA will need to include information on evaluation plans for their proposed programs.
- Recompeting programs should note the new emphasis on sustainability (including an aggregate match schedule), selection criteria and range of allowable AmeriCorps member activities. These changes are consistent with the new AmeriCorps rule.

CSC expects that the 2007 AmeriCorps grantmaking process will be a competitive one. For more information on available funding, please see pages 13-14.

CSC is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website, [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov), to keep applicants abreast of changes. Please check our website

frequently. Additionally, our website will also provide information on technical assistance opportunities, including outreach sessions to be conducted September 18-22, 2006.

This RFA provides CSC with the opportunity to support organizations throughout California that are using service and volunteerism as strategies to address pressing community needs. We hope that our grants align with your local needs and look forward to hearing from you. If you have questions, please contact us at (916) 322-2210 or [funding@csc.ca.gov](mailto:funding@csc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Karen Baker  
Executive Director

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# NATIONAL SERVICE OVERVIEW

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## NATIONAL SERVICE BACKGROUND

From American philosopher William James' original vision of non-military national service in the early twentieth century, national service has grown to address the needs of our communities and represent the ideals of our country. When faced with challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, crime, and environmental problems, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of individuals to identify solutions to our pressing problems. National service has provided opportunities for community members to make sustained commitments to service that have benefited individuals and communities alike. Through these intensive commitments, individuals build upon long-standing American traditions – neighbors helping neighbors, a commitment to the greater good, innovation, and collective problem solving.

Further, national service has a positive impact on those who serve. Service helps bridge ethnic, racial, religious, and economic divides. It builds civic responsibility and enables participants to practice responsible citizenship. It helps youth make the transition into adulthood. It enables seniors to leave a legacy. It demonstrates that people with disabilities are an important part of the answer to neighborhood and community problems. Through service, members of a community become citizens, rather than spectators, participating more fully in the civic life of the nation. In addition, through service, individuals develop skills and gain valuable experience critical to their future success. These principles were first incorporated into a practical modern-day national service program by President Johnson in the early 1960s. By signing the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Johnson created Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) and enlisted ordinary Americans in his “war on poverty.” Those who answered his call began serving at migrant camps in California, poor regions of the Appalachians and low-income neighborhoods throughout the country.

## NATIONAL SERVICE TODAY

Today, national service participants continue to build upon the legacies established by programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, Peace Corps, VISTA, and others.

National service continues to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds to real needs in their communities and promote a culture of service. Through AmeriCorps, program participants – known as members -- are not only performing direct service, but are also mobilizing members of local communities. This year, AmeriCorps members throughout the country are serving alongside 800,000 community volunteers that they have recruited. Together, members and volunteers are tutoring children, mentoring youth, building affordable housing, responding to natural disasters and preserving natural resources. Through these efforts, AmeriCorps members are bringing President Bush's call for all Americans to serve 4,000 hours over the course of their lifetimes into the communities in which they serve.

The wide range of issues addressed by national service can be seen in the Corporation for National and Community Service's (“the Corporation”) recently released five-year strategic plan. This plan calls upon all of the Corporation's programs – including AmeriCorps – to mobilize more volunteers, develop a brighter future for youth, engage students in service to their communities, and harness the experience and talents of Baby Boomers.



## THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Created in 1993, the Corporation provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities through three major programs that engage approximately 1.6 million Americans each year to meet community needs. These three programs are:

- *AmeriCorps* – engages thousands of Americans on a full- or part-time basis to help communities address their toughest challenges;
- *Learn and Serve America* – engages K-12 and higher education students in service activities that link to their academic curriculum; and,
- *National Senior Service Corps* – uses the skills, talents, and experiences of older Americans to help make communities stronger, safer, and healthier.

Through its programs and other efforts, the Corporation seeks to achieve three strategic goals:

- *Meet Critical Needs in Local Communities Through Service* – Throughout the nation, millions of lives are improved and problems solved through national service participants and the community volunteers they recruit.
- *Strengthen Communities to Engage Citizens* – Corporation programs help community organizations and institutions develop strong communities through engaged citizens. By engaging local community members, Corporation programs leave communities with increased capacity to sustain efforts beyond the scope of Corporation resources.
- *Engage Americans in a Lifetime of Volunteering and Service* – Through its programs, the Corporation offers every American, whether as a member, program participant, or community volunteer, a meaningful opportunity to serve and make a difference in their local community.

Information regarding the Corporation's funding priorities for the 2007 AmeriCorps grantmaking cycle is available on page 16.

## AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps provides thousands of Americans of all ages, abilities and backgrounds with intensive full- and part-time opportunities to serve their communities and build the capacity of grassroots organizations to meet local environmental, educational, public safety, or other human needs. AmeriCorps joins a long tradition of programs that encourage and reward service – programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Montgomery GI Bill, and the Peace Corps. In return for their service, AmeriCorps members receive a modest living allowance and an education award that can be used to pay existing college loans or continuing education costs. Partnerships that sponsor AmeriCorps programs recruit, select, and train their own AmeriCorps members, design and operate their local programs, and are responsible for providing funds and other resources to match the federal funds they receive through their AmeriCorps grant.

In the short time since AmeriCorps' inception in 1994, its members have achieved impressive results. Nearly 500,000 individuals are alumni of the program, and now take their place as the next generation of community leaders, educators, health professionals, and the like. In 2006, more than 70,000 AmeriCorps members are serving in communities throughout the country. Goals of AmeriCorps include:



- **Getting Things Done.** AmeriCorps helps communities meet needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs through direct and demonstrable service.
- **Strengthening Communities.** AmeriCorps builds the capacity of community organizations and other institutions to more effectively engage community volunteers to improve our communities.
- **Encouraging Responsibility.** Through service and civic education, AmeriCorps members become agents of community solutions and develop an ethic of lifelong service.
- **Expanding Opportunity.** AmeriCorps helps those who help America. Members develop professional skills, gain invaluable experience and receive education awards for education or job training.

The AmeriCorps national service network includes AmeriCorps\*State and National programs, Indian Tribe and U.S. Territories programs, Education Awards Program, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, and AmeriCorps\*NCCC. For more information about these various AmeriCorps programs, please visit [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org).

## CALIFORNIA SERVICE CORPS

The California Service Corps (CSC) is charged with increasing the number of Californians involved with service and volunteerism throughout the state. CSC administers programs such as AmeriCorps and Citizen Corps, the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning, guides policy development to support the nonprofit and service fields, and is responsible for the coordination of CaliforniaVolunteers.org, a statewide network that matches Californians to volunteer opportunities in their communities. Through these programs and initiatives, Californians of all ages and abilities are provided with ongoing opportunities to volunteer, to become better prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters, and ultimately, to embrace a lifetime ethic of service.

CSC selects and administers AmeriCorps grants under the provisions of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. During the 2006-07 program year, approximately 5,000 AmeriCorps members will serve under the sponsorship of 52 public-private partnerships to meet critical state needs. Since its inception, CSC has secured and disseminated over \$320 million in AmeriCorps funding from the federal Corporation for National and Community Service to local and statewide public and nonprofit agencies that have created opportunities for approximately 60,000 AmeriCorps members to serve California. CSC provides AmeriCorps programs with extensive training and ongoing technical assistance to support the development of high quality AmeriCorps programs. Each program works closely with a CSC program associate to ensure progress towards program performance measures, a meaningful service experience for AmeriCorps members, and compliance with applicable regulations.

In its role as the state Point of Contact for Citizen Corps, a program of the USA Freedom Corps, CSC collaborates with leading organizations from the emergency response, non-governmental relief and volunteer fields to expand the engagement of community members in preparing for and responding to disasters and other emergencies. CSC supports Citizen Corps Councils that coordinate efforts among first responders, such as police and fire departments, with relief organizations and service organizations that mobilize volunteers for disaster assistance. In addition, CSC supports Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for volunteers in the areas of disaster preparedness, fire suppression, first aid, as well as light search and rescue.





Beyond its grantmaking responsibilities, CSC seeks to promote volunteer opportunities throughout the state and honor those who serve. Through the California Volunteer Matching Network, Californians can identify a number of volunteer opportunities in their local community. In addition, the Governor and First Lady's Service Award program honors children ages 5-14 who complete 25 hours of volunteer service over the course of 12 months. For more information regarding CSC and its programs, please visit the CSC website at [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov).



# GENERAL GRANT INFORMATION

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## POTENTIAL CHANGE TO RFA GUIDELINES AND SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE

This Request for Applications (RFA) was created in good faith and based on the most recent guidance provided by the Corporation. The amount of funds available for AmeriCorps, as well as new grant limits and requirements, is dependent upon the congressional appropriations process yet to be concluded. These factors may require changes to the Corporation's guidance and to this RFA. If changes are required, CSC will issue a supplemental RFA at the earliest possible date. If a supplemental RFA is issued, it will be available on the CSC website – [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov). Applicants are advised to check the website on a weekly basis in the event that a supplemental RFA is issued.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/CLASPs

CSC continues its longstanding practice of supporting strong community partnerships that utilize AmeriCorps resources to develop thoughtful and comprehensive strategies to address the challenges that face California's communities. Therefore, all applicants are required to develop a California Local Area Service Partnership (CLASP). CLASPs are locally defined public-private partnerships that must include a *minimum of three independent organizations*. CLASPs are required to ensure that AmeriCorps programs are reflective of the communities in which they serve, are supported by the community, and assist the program in instituting long-term change and sustainable solutions to community needs.

Partners may include, but are not limited to: community-based organizations; senior and youth organizations; disability organizations; K-12 schools, colleges, and universities; churches and faith-based organizations; local, state, and federal government agencies; businesses and foundations; health care organizations; and, other national service programs. However, an organization classified as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply, serve as a host site for member placements, or act in any type of supervisory role in the proposed AmeriCorps program.

*At a minimum, a CLASP must have at least one public and one private partner (non-profit or for-profit entity).* CSC considers 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to be private entities. The primary members of the CLASP must include at least three independent organizations, each of which must have significant roles in planning, operating, and sustaining the program. Other members of the CLASP should have ongoing roles and/or provide other contributions such as training resources, to ensure the success of the program. All CLASP members should be identified on the CLASP Form submitted as part of the application package.

- **Support for Small Community Organizations.** AmeriCorps has a long tradition of assisting small community organizations in addressing community needs. Since the program's inception, thousands of members have served with small community organizations through literacy programs managed by churches and health services programs provided by small community-based organizations. However, many similar organizations have not received assistance through public funding. It is CSC's intention to make AmeriCorps resources more accessible to small community organizations (faith-based and secular) that may have little or no experience with government grants.



All applicants are encouraged to support the efforts of small community organizations to meet local needs. Small community organizations may include civic, community and nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, disability organizations and faith-based organizations. Applicants might engage small community organizations in roles such as subgrantees, member placement sites, or volunteer recruitment partnerships. Such partnerships should be detailed on the applicant's CLASP forms. In developing an application and strengthening activities with faith-based and/or small community organizations, applicants should consult the Corporation's Faith-Based Toolkit, available at – [www.nationalservicerresources.org/initiatives/faces](http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/initiatives/faces).

As noted above, in some instances, small community organizations may be direct applicants for grant funding. In other cases, Corporation-funded programs might partner with such organizations to meet their objectives. In still other cases, Corporation grantees may serve as intermediaries for small organizations.

- **Intermediary Organizations.** Intermediary organizations provide the mechanism through which small community organizations may access AmeriCorps and other Corporation resources. Intermediaries are national, regional, state, or local organizations that agree to provide the technical and financial support to assist small community organizations that do not have the capacity to perform these functions. Intermediaries serve as the legal applicant for a Corporation grant, thereby ensuring that the systems to manage a federal grant are in place. Intermediaries may place individual members at the sites of small community organizations and assume responsibility for monitoring the progress of the sites. Intermediaries may take different forms. For example, a regional intermediary may support community organizations engaged in one or more issue areas, or a statewide intermediary may support community organizations engaged in one primary issue area.

For more information regarding partnering with small community organizations, please consult Appendix A on page 57.

## TYPES OF APPLICANTS

For the 2007-08 grantmaking cycle, there will be four types of applicants seeking AmeriCorps grant funding through this RFA. More detail regarding each of these applicant types and specific application conditions and requirements is provided below. Continuation programs (i.e., current recipients of AmeriCorps operating grants that are not entering the final year of their current grant period) should **NOT** use this RFA, or the accompanying *Forms and Instructions*. CSC will issue continuation instructions and guidance at a later date.

- **New Applicants.** CSC encourages the development of innovative programs operated by partnerships new to the AmeriCorps family and in communities that have not previously utilized AmeriCorps resources. In support of this, CSC will add an additional 10 percent to the combined score of new applicants in determining the final rank order listing of applicants. The score adjustment is provided to mitigate for the competitive disadvantage experienced by new applicants due to their lack of familiarity with AmeriCorps terminology, the application process, and/or other unique features of the grantmaking process that existing AmeriCorps programs are exposed to during their operations. The 10 percent score adjustment is not provided to mitigate for any program quality differential between new and existing programs. Please see page 50 for more information regarding the scoring and selection process.



New applicants are defined as those in which neither the legal applicant, nor primary partnering organizations, nor individuals involved in developing the current AmeriCorps application have developed an AmeriCorps application that has been awarded an operating grant by CSC or the Corporation in the last five years. Further, new applicants are those in which no individuals that were employed during the past five years as core program staff of an AmeriCorps program (CSC or Corporation), state commission, or the Corporation were involved in the development of the program application.

CSC staff will make final decisions designating applicants as new after reviewing application materials. In an effort to balance support for currently operating programs with that for new applicants, CSC will suspend its practice of providing an additional 10 percent to the score of new applicants during grantmaking processes in which CSC's formula funding allocation from the Corporation is reduced by 10 percent or more from the previous program year. Please see page 13 for more information regarding formula and competitive funding.

For purposes of this RFA, 2006 AmeriCorps planning grantees are not considered new applicants and will not receive a 10 percent score adjustment.

CSC strongly encourages all new applicants to review technical assistance materials available on the CSC website – [www.csc.ca.gov/grants/current\\_opps.asp](http://www.csc.ca.gov/grants/current_opps.asp).

- **Recompeting Programs.** AmeriCorps programs entering the final year of their grant period are required to submit a new application if they wish to be considered for future AmeriCorps funding. This process is known as recompetition. During the upcoming months, CSC staff will notify programs of any issues of concern, flag them for discussion in the interview stage of the grantmaking process, and take them into consideration as they work with programs during the 2006-07 program year. Recompeting programs are reminded that submitting an application does not guarantee success in securing future funding.

Recompeting programs must complete an *AmeriCorps Accomplishment and Impact Summary* describing program accomplishments and impacts for the last three years of AmeriCorps funding received, including performance measure targets. In addition, applicants must include data regarding AmeriCorps member enrollment and retention data for the same three-year period. More information regarding these requirements is included in the *Application Forms and Instructions*. Further, recompeting programs must provide a summary of any evaluation studies completed on the AmeriCorps program during the last three completed program years. Recompeting applicants are advised that previous site visit reports, program progress reports, financial reports, WBRS documentation, and member recruitment and retention rates, will be reviewed as part of the selection process.

- **2006 Planning Grantees.** The planning grantee designation refers to those applicants who received a 2006 AmeriCorps planning grant. Due to the training and technical assistance provided by CSC during the planning grant contract period, planning grantees will not receive the 10 percent score adjustment that is given to new applicants.



- **Experienced Applicants.** Applicants who propose an AmeriCorps program that has not previously operated, but do not meet the definition of a new applicant, will be deemed experienced applicants. Experienced applicants will not receive the new applicant score adjustment in the final rank order listing of applicants. Since they are proposing a new program design, experienced applicants do not have accomplishments or impacts in the area to be addressed. Therefore, experienced applicants are NOT required to submit the *AmeriCorps Accomplishment and Impact Summary* form as part of their application. However, legal applicants or partnering organizations that have previously received, or are currently receiving, AmeriCorps funding are advised that the performance of the previous/current AmeriCorps program will be utilized in evaluating their application.

An example of an experienced applicant is one that currently administers an AmeriCorps operating grant in which members serve as tutors and mentors to youth in a school-based afterschool program. For the 2007 grant cycle, the legal applicant proposes a new program design in which members serve at Healthy Start sites, conduct community health outreach and teach health education classes. In this instance, the legal applicant (1) does not meet the definition of a new applicant, and (2) has not previously implemented the proposed program design.

- **Previously Funded Programs.** The previously funded program designation applies to any program who has previously received an AmeriCorps operating grant from CSC or the Corporation in any of the past five completed program years (2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, or 2005-06). Applications will receive this designation if the proposed program is similar in scope and purpose to the program previously operated by the partnership. This definition holds true even if the legal applicant for the program has changed.

An example of a previously funded program is one that operated for the 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 program years, unsuccessfully applied for funding in the 2006 AmeriCorps grant cycle, and is now submitting an application for a program that is very similar to that which operated from 2002-2005.

Previously funded programs must complete an *AmeriCorps Accomplishment and Impact Summary* describing program accomplishments and impacts for the last three years of AmeriCorps funding received, including reporting on performance measures. In addition, applicants must include data regarding AmeriCorps member enrollment and retention data for the same three-year period. More information regarding these requirements is included in the *Application Forms and Instructions*. Previously funded programs are advised that previous site visit reports, program progress reports, financial reports, WBRs documentation, and member recruitment and retention rates, will be reviewed as part of the selection process.

## GRANT PARAMETERS

- **Funding Available.** AmeriCorps funding comes to California from the Corporation through two separate funding streams – formula and competitive funds.

As the state's governor-appointed national service commission, CSC receives an allotment of discretionary formula funding. Formula funds are generally awarded to smaller programs, less experienced programs or first-time applicants.



The Corporation awards competitive funds to programs through a national competition. Through their grantmaking processes, state commissions such as CSC nominate programs to participate in the Corporation's national competition. Programs that receive these competitive grants must therefore contend successfully at both the state and federal levels. Competitive grantees are typically experienced programs, are larger in size, span a larger geographic area, strongly address Corporation funding priorities, and/or have particularly innovative program designs.

Actual available funding is dependent upon the Corporation's final appropriation in the 2007 Federal Budget Act. At this time, CSC expects to have more applicants than it has available funds. CSC anticipates a level formula allocation, \$9.7 million for the 2007-08 program year. This will support \$5 million in formula continuation requests and \$4.7 million for new and recompeting programs. The Corporation estimates that \$55 million in national competitive funding will be available for new and recompeting programs. If California were to receive its population fair share, it would receive approximately \$6.8 million. Current commitments to recompeting competitive programs exceed \$10.7 million.

- **Afterschool Initiative.** CSC may launch an afterschool initiative for the 2007 grantmaking cycle and will post information as soon as it becomes available. Interested applicants are advised to check CSC's website at least once per week for updates.
- **Grant Size Limits.** The size of AmeriCorps grants is directly tied to the number of AmeriCorps members that a program will recruit, enroll and support. A full-time AmeriCorps member is equivalent to one Member Service Year (MSY). AmeriCorps grants are calculated by multiplying the number of Member Service Years (MSY) by the cost per MSY. For example, a successful applicant requesting 25 MSYs at a cost per MSY of \$14,000 would receive a grant of \$350,000 (25 x \$14,000). Please see page 32 for further information regarding the definition of a MSY and a conversion chart.

CSC guidelines for 2007 limit the cost per MSY for new and experienced applicants (per definitions on page 11) to \$15,675. Please see page 47 for more information regarding CSC's Cost per MSY policy.

CSC's 2006-07 portfolio consists of AmeriCorps grants ranging in size from \$158,132 to \$1.5 million, with an average grant size of \$516,637.

Limits on grant requests are based on applicant types as follows:

| Applicant Type            | Formula Funding | Competitive Funding |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| New Applicant             | \$425,000       | No limit            |
| Planning Grantee          | \$425,000       | No limit            |
| Experienced Applicant     | \$425,000       | No limit            |
| Previously Funded Program | \$850,000       | No limit            |
| Recompeting Program       | \$850,000       | No limit            |



Applicants with grant size requests in excess of the allowable maximum formula limit for their designation will automatically be considered as applicants for the national competition. Applicants that are unsuccessful in the national competition will be considered for formula funding.

CSC urges applicants to request only those member positions that they are confident they can fill. Previously funded and recompetiting applicants are advised to limit their requests to the number of MSYs that they have successfully utilized in the past. Corporation and CSC policies do penalize those programs that have excessively low enrollment (i.e., the number of members to whom a program officially offers an AmeriCorps position) and retention (i.e., the number of members who successfully complete their agreed-upon term of service) rates.

- **Minimum Program Size.** In order to provide member positions in quantities that make an impact on identified community needs, CSC policies require that applicants request no fewer than 20 MSYs. Exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis, by reviewing justification provided by the applicant in the program narrative. Under no circumstances will CSC accept applications for fewer than 10 MSYs. Program designs in CSC's 2006-07 portfolio range from 12 to 128 MSYs, with an average program size of 51 MSYs.
- **Grant Period.** Grants awarded through this selection process will support programming beginning in the fall of 2007. The Corporation and CSC generally provide funding for a three-year grant period, assuming demonstrated success toward achieving program performance measures and the completion of an annual continuation request. Applications for 2007 must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the first year of operation. CSC expects that programmatic activities for the second and third years of operation will build upon, and be similar in scope to, those of the first year.
- **Expansion Opportunities During the Grant Period.** Applicants should be advised that expansion opportunities in the second and third year of a grant period may be extremely limited or unavailable. As a result, applicants should not expect to expand program operations in the second or third year of the grant period.
- **Allowable Costs and Matching Funds Requirement.** AmeriCorps grants provide funding in support of member support costs and program operating costs. AmeriCorps funding can be used for up to:
  - 85 percent of member support costs, including the minimum living allowance, FICA, worker's compensation, and health insurance; and,
  - 67 percent of program operating costs, including staff, evaluation, administration, and other operating costs.

All other costs must be provided for by the grantee in the form of matching funds. Minimum matching funds requirements come in three forms:

- Member Support Costs (non-federal cash);
- Program Operating Costs (cash or in-kind, federal or non-federal); and,
- Overall Share (aggregate amount a grantee contributes to program).

More information regarding matching funds requirements can be found on page 44.





## TYPES OF AMERICORPS GRANTS

- **Operating Grants.** Operating grants support fully developed plans to implement a new or existing AmeriCorps program. Operating grants do not support a one-year planning period followed by implementation during the second and third year of the grant period. Applicants wishing to apply for an operating grant should follow the submission procedure outlined in the *Application Forms and Instructions* portion of this RFA. CSC's AmeriCorps operating grants will support two primary program types:
  - *Direct Service* – AmeriCorps programs have traditionally focused on providing direct services (i.e., activities in which members are in direct contact with beneficiaries of service). CSC anticipates that most applicants responding to this RFA will present program designs that are primarily focused on direct service. Unless otherwise specified, all language in this RFA applies to such AmeriCorps programs.
  - *Volunteer Mobilization Pilot* – Applicants may choose to focus entirely on building their community's capacity to effectively utilize volunteers to address pressing local needs. Members in these Pilot programs will provide support in the full range of volunteer management activities, including recruitment, selection and placement, training and supervision, as well as recognition. For more information, see page 27.
- **Program Development Grants.** Program development grantees receive a one-year grant that assists them in establishing and refining program systems, including partnership development, site orientation as well as member recruitment and training plans. In years two and three of the grant period, program development grantees receive operating grants. *Applicants may not apply directly for a program development grant.* CSC will offer such grants to high-quality applicants, if and only if, formula funding is available to do so, but issues with the National Service Trust limit CSC's ability to fund operating grants.
- **Planning Grants.** Planning grants support a process in which community partners have identified a concept for an AmeriCorps program, but need additional resources to plan, develop and prepare the program for implementation. CSC does not expect to offer planning grants for 2007.

## 2007 CORPORATION FUNDING PRIORITIES

On an annual basis, the Corporation issues a set of funding priorities that it considers when making its final selections for national competitive funding. Applicants who must apply for the national competition because of the size of their request, should in particular, note the Corporation's priorities for 2007.

- *Mobilizing more volunteers* – The Corporation will invest in programs that can effectively recruit, train, manage, and use volunteers who will ultimately have an impact on the success of their program. Programs will increase the capacity of faith-based and other community organizations to mobilize volunteers in communities to meet critical needs. The Corporation plans to support organizations that develop strong partnerships and collaborations with volunteer centers or other volunteer connector organizations in their service areas.





- *Ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth* – The Corporation will invest in programs that provide caring adults as mentors for youth from disadvantaged circumstances, and opportunities for young people from disadvantaged circumstances to serve their communities. The Corporation plans to support programs that recruit and manage at-risk youth serving in national service programs, and mentoring efforts, particularly those targeting children of prisoners.
- *Engaging students in communities* – The Corporation will invest in programs that implement effective strategies for connecting their school, faculty, staff, and administration with their communities through service and volunteering. The Corporation plans to support K-12 and higher education institutions that effectively incorporate service-learning into their curricula, and the number of college students engaged in community service and service-learning. The Corporation will also help colleges and universities expand support for student service.
- *Harnessing baby boomers' experience* – The Corporation will invest in programs that plan to capture the talents, skills, energy, and experience of baby boomers and older Americans to meet local and national needs. It plans to improve the capacity of nonprofits to attract and retain boomers via targeted training and technical assistance.

CSC advises applicants that well-designed programs focused on local needs are more competitive than those that attempt to create priority-related program design elements in an attempt to increase their competitiveness.

## **2007 CSC FUNDING PRIORITIES**

There are no state funding priorities for the 2007 AmeriCorps RFA and funding cycle.

In April 2007, CSC awarded 22 planning grants to organizations that addressed the five issues of at-risk children and youth; volunteer management and capacity building; childhood obesity; emergency preparedness, response, relief and recovery; and the environment. CSC believes that its funding, staff time, training and technical assistance represent a significant investment of resources in the five areas previously identified as funding priorities for programs that will apply through this RFA. As such, no state funding priorities have been designated for the 2007 funding cycle.



# PROGRAM DESIGN ELEMENTS

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## PROGRAM DESIGN OVERVIEW

Across California, AmeriCorps provides a variety of specific and identifiable services to communities. For example, programs use AmeriCorps members to recruit and organize local volunteers to renovate low-income housing or build a playground in a vacant lot. Members restore streams or urban parks alongside community residents. AmeriCorps members help recruit, support, and manage community volunteers who support disaster preparedness. Members may also perform a variety of capacity building activities that enhance the capacity of the community-based organizations in which they serve, including raising funds to support approved projects and conducting research to maximize the impact of the organization. Although programs may engage members in a variety of activities, CSC expects that all programs will be able to demonstrate significant and measurable impacts in their communities.

In the past, performing *direct service* activities such as tutoring children, building houses, or delivering meals to homebound seniors has been the primary focus of AmeriCorps members' service. The Corporation defines *direct service* activities as those that provide a direct, measurable benefit to an individual, group, or a community. Now, however, it is permissible for AmeriCorps programs to engage AmeriCorps members in *capacity building* activities such as volunteer recruitment and support. Capacity building activities are those that produce organizational outcomes, including enhancing the systems, infrastructure, and human resources of an organization that is addressing otherwise unmet community needs. Although direct service activities should remain the focus of member service hours, AmeriCorps members may engage in capacity building activities that are consistent with the scope of the proposed program.

Local involvement and input are vital to the development of high-quality service programs that build and sustain communities. Successful programs are those that use extensive, broad-based local input and representatives of key stakeholder groups to design, implement, and evaluate their projects. This includes consultation with:

- representatives from the communities the program serves;
- program members (or potential members); and,
- appropriate community agencies (secular and faith-based), businesses, foundations, local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, and local government.

Member activities will fall into one of three program design categories:

- *Needs and Service Activities* – direct service that addresses the identified need;
- *Member Development* – the training members receive to complete their service, including member orientation, ongoing training, and Life After AmeriCorps training; and,
- *Strengthening Communities* – volunteer recruitment and support in addition to other capacity building activities (if proposed).

Applicants will develop performance measures in each of the three program design categories that quantify the impact of member service activities.



As a general rule, AmeriCorps members devote 80 percent of their service hours towards the program's activities in the areas of *Needs and Service Activities* and *Strengthening Communities*. Of this 80 percent, the majority of member service hours should support direct service and volunteer recruitment and support activities with the balance (as determined by the program) supporting capacity building activities. If programs choose to engage their AmeriCorps members in capacity building activities, no more than 10 percent of member service hours may be directed to such activities. The remaining 20 percent of service hours may be directed towards providing members the training they need to successfully complete service activities. Common program models include those in which members serve four days per week and receive ongoing training one day per week.

| <b>Needs and Service Activities</b> | <b>Strengthening Communities</b>     |   | <b>Member Development</b>       |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
|                                     | <i>Not more than 80 percent</i>      |   | <i>Not more than 20 percent</i> |
| Direct service activities           | Volunteer recruitment and/or support | Capacity building activities (optional) | Member training                 |
|                                     |                                      | <i>Not more than 10 percent</i>         |                                 |

CSC prefers program models that place members in teams of two or more at well-prepared placement sites with strong member supervision. In some instances, placement of members in teams may not be feasible. In such cases, CSC may approve program designs that place members individually when appropriate support structures are in place, including opportunities for frequent interaction, training, reflection with other members and/or significant support from site staff and others through mentoring relationships.

As part of the submission package, applicants will complete performance measure worksheets that will connect the identified community need with the AmeriCorps member service activities and the desired outcomes of the proposed program. Successful applicants will ensure that their performance measures are consistent with the community need and service activities described in the program narrative.

## **EXAMPLES OF MEMBER SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

In meeting local community needs, AmeriCorps supports a wide variety of activities in the issue areas of education, environment, public safety, and health/other human needs. Examples in each of the issue areas include:

### *Education*

- Providing targeted tutoring in language arts and math to students in high priority schools who tested below grade level;
- Placing members as service-learning coordinators in schools and afterschool programs;
- Utilizing college students, particularly federal college work-study students, to tutor children in both during and afterschool programs;
- Increasing completion rates of courses leading to graduation/college entrance for at-risk youth or youth with disabilities; and,
- Improving the quality and availability of child development programs by serving in day care and Head Start centers and preschool programs.



### *Environment*

- Eliminating environmental risks, especially those that affect children and youth, such as lead poisoning and radon exposure;
- Engaging community volunteers in ongoing environmental monitoring, such as water quality testing;
- Creating a full-time year round youth corps or summer youth corps program undertaking service projects with visible public benefits, including natural resource projects; and,
- Assessing, restoring and stewarding local watersheds.

### *Health and Other Human Needs*

- Providing nutrition education and engaging children and adults in physical activity;
- Improving health of low-income communities by conducting outreach and offering preventive health services, including immunization, through community health clinics;
- Addressing public health concerns by providing resources to the community through door-to-door contact, school-based meetings, community meetings, and other means;
- Helping individuals who are homeless, particularly families, by providing shelter support, assisting in moving into permanent housing and related services; and,
- Introducing college students to careers in health care through placements in community health clinics and other clinical settings.

### *Public Safety*

- Enhancing community policing efforts by working with local law enforcement to develop specific crime prevention strategies targeted at key locations such as playgrounds and other public gathering places for children, youth and other potentially vulnerable populations;
- Reducing crime against children and youth by creating safe havens and involving youth in conflict resolution and prevention efforts;
- Providing community disaster/emergency preparedness education and training to individuals, families, and community organizations (secular and faith-based);
- Providing prevention activities for illegal drug use and intervention support for children and youth; and,
- Serving as outreach specialists as a means to deter domestic violence and child abuse.

CSC values programs that are focused on a single issue area, or on multiple issue areas that are complementary. For example, an afterschool program might address the dual goals of providing tutoring aimed at building literacy and increasing math skills (education) while offering a safe haven for children during the hours immediately following the end of class (public safety). Although the service activities of programs may cross several issue areas, successful applicants will focus the activities of members on those that the legal applicant and other partnering organizations have specific expertise in, and that directly relate to, the community need identified in the program narrative. For example, a program focused on increasing the academic success of children should not feel compelled to address issues related to other human needs, unless doing so significantly contributes to the program design. Applicants with programs that encompass multiple issue areas are required to develop performance measures that track relevant outcomes in each area.



## NEEDS AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Every AmeriCorps program must provide opportunities for the local community to define its problems and to solve them. You must be able to demonstrate that your program or the service you offer provides a direct benefit that the community values, and that existing funds or volunteers do not already provide this service. In addition, your program's service activities must demonstrate positive impact on the communities that it serves.

The *Needs and Service Activities* section should describe the need(s) of the involved communities, how the need has been identified, and how the program will address the need, including, but not limited to, member service activities.

- **Community Need.** Successful applicants will document a compelling community need with specific *local* data (city, county, or state) that matches the area to be served and is valued by the community. Such statistics should document the scope and severity of the need to be addressed by the AmeriCorps program, and avoid those that provide a portrait of the community as a whole. For example, the Bethel Police Department has documented a 55% increase in youth-involved theft during the hours immediately following the close of school, rather than a generic statement that there is a national trend toward higher youth crime in the hours after school.
- **Why AmeriCorps.** Successful applicants will clearly describe why AmeriCorps resources represent an effective strategy for addressing the identified need. In describing the activities of the proposed program, applicants must clearly identify how their activities will effectively respond to and address the identified need(s) of the community. In addition, they should describe the roles AmeriCorps members will play in the proposed activities and how these roles will lead to positive outcomes for the members and the community.
- **Tutoring Programs.** Tutoring programs are defined as those that use AmeriCorps members to provide planned, consistent, one-to-one or small group activities that build on students' strengths and target students' needs, with the ultimate goal of developing and improving academic performance. Most commonly, AmeriCorps tutoring programs provide literacy tutoring.

Applicants proposing literacy tutoring must ensure that tutoring activities are consistent with The No Child Left Behind Act. A key element of this plan is to support reading instruction built upon research-based methods that work to ensure that every child in public schools reads at or above grade level by third grade. Successful applicants conducting literacy tutoring programs will be those that demonstrate that their activities occur in sites that incorporate scientifically-based approaches<sup>1</sup> to reading, including those identified by the National Reading Panel. Additional information regarding the No Child Left Behind Act is available at [www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbreference/reference.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbreference/reference.pdf).

The Corporation defines a tutor as:

someone whose primary goal is to increase academic achievement in reading or other core subjects through planned, consistent, one-to-one or small-group sessions and activities that build on the academic strengths of students in kindergarten through 12th grade, and target their academic needs. A tutor does not include someone engaged in other academic support activities,

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<sup>1</sup> For information about the five basic reading components, scientifically-based reading instruction and the National Reading Panel, see [www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/subgroups.htm](http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/subgroups.htm) and [www.nwrel.org/learns](http://www.nwrel.org/learns).



such as mentoring and after-school program support, whose primary goal is something other than increasing academic achievement. For example, providing a safe place for children is not tutoring, even if some of the program activities focus on homework help.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act sets forth proficiency requirements for individuals that will serve as tutors (as defined above). Proficiency requirements for AmeriCorps members serving as tutors differ depending on the entity that “hires” the AmeriCorps member. Generally, California state employment law does not consider AmeriCorps members as employees. As such, AmeriCorps members are deemed proficient if they: (1) successfully complete pre- and in-service specialized training; and, (2) have a high school diploma or its equivalent, or a higher degree, or pass a proficiency test.

In the event an AmeriCorps member is considered an employee of a local education agency or school, as determined by state law, the member must meet paraprofessional qualifications outlined under the No Child Left Behind Act.

In their applications, tutoring programs must:

- Describe criteria for selecting and qualifying tutors;
  - Identify the strategies or tools it will use to assess student progress and measure student outcomes;
  - Certify that the tutoring curriculum, as well as pre-service and in-service training content, are high-quality and research-based, consistent with the instructional program of the local educational agency or with State academic content standards;
  - Include appropriate member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring; and,
  - Provide specialized high-quality and research-based, member pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the member will perform.
- ***Mentoring Programs.*** Applicants proposing mentoring activities should assure that such activities are consistent with the *Recommended Best Practices for Mentoring Programs* found at [www.mentoring.ca.gov](http://www.mentoring.ca.gov).
  - ***Collaboration with Other National Service Programs.*** Both the Corporation and CSC encourage applicants to begin or continue collaborative relationships with other national service programs. The Corporation defines collaboration as a mutually beneficial relationship entered into by two or more organizations or programs to achieve a common goal. Many examples of national service programs collaborating to provide more effective service exist, including:
    - The San Francisco Experience Corps has successfully blended its own cadre of volunteers with AmeriCorps and Senior Corps resources. San Francisco Experience Corps is an independent program that develops caring relationships with children through tutoring and mentoring during the school day and in afterschool programs. Program participants tutor one-on-one or in small groups, provide classroom assistance, and assist in afterschool programs. They also support youth in enrichment activities, playing games, reading books, or developing programs for children based on their own unique backgrounds and experiences. The program has assigned a VISTA as the volunteer coordinator at the Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center. In the course of the VISTA's service, the VISTA works with participants that include AmeriCorps members of all ages, Retired





and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) participants, Experience Corps' own volunteer corps members, and the occasional Foster Grandparent.

- The SCALES (Schools and Children Engaged in Learning and Service) project is a school-based Learn and Serve program administered by a local school district. SCALES utilizes AmeriCorps members as service-learning coordinators at schools throughout the district. Once members are trained on service-learning concepts and best practices, the district then places them with individual teachers that use service-learning at participating schools. Working with their assigned teacher/supervisor, members research potential projects, conduct outreach to establish relationships with community partners, identify and secure service project resources and/or supplies, act as liaisons between teachers and community partners, and make arrangements for the service project activities. Finally, the members deepen their own understanding of service-learning principles by helping their teachers conduct post-activity reflection sessions with their students.

For more information regarding national service programs, please visit the Corporation's website – [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov). For additional information about national service programs in your area, please visit the National Service Program Directory on the CSC website – [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov).

- **Disaster Preparedness and Response.** CSC continues to be interested in funding high-quality programs involved in community-based disaster preparedness and response efforts.

At the most basic level, every CSC-funded AmeriCorps program is required to develop a continuity plan to ensure the safety of program members and staff and ongoing program operations in the event of an emergency. This plan, known as a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), addresses policies and procedures to guide personnel and organize resources to ensure the safety and security of AmeriCorps members and program staff in times of emergency. In addition, these plans outline strategies and contingencies to permit the program to continue operating and potentially offer limited assistance to first responders, emergency management agencies, and disaster relief organizations.

AmeriCorps programs can contribute to disaster preparedness and response in a variety of ways. Some program designs may focus member service hours exclusively on disaster preparedness activities such as those illustrated in the examples that follow. Other programs will provide specialized emergency training to AmeriCorps members whose service activity focuses on another need, such as education or the environment.

Examples of disaster preparedness and response programs include those that, *in partnership with appropriate public safety agencies*, develop systems to:

- mobilize trained volunteers to assist first responders such as police/sheriff departments, fire/rescue departments, emergency management agencies, and other agencies involved in public safety;
- provide support for professional or volunteer fire departments, including managing volunteer programs, assisting with fire prevention and outreach, public education, and emergency response;
- organize, conduct, and support community-based immunization programs related to bioterrorism public health concerns;



- provide immediate support to response agencies responding to a disaster or other emergency. Services may include relief of rescue workers, search and rescue, first aid, coordination of emergency supplies, and establishment of communication links for response workers;
- organize communities to identify and respond to crime through existing community organizations, law enforcement, schools, institutions of higher education, and the business community. Such programs may conduct needs assessments and identify resources to support improvements, such as the creation of Neighborhood or Business Watch programs; and,
- support the activities and capacity building efforts of Citizen Corps Councils.

The above serve as a small number of examples. Local communities are in the best position to determine appropriate strategies for integrating service and volunteerism with professional emergency response activities.

Successful applicants will be those that, in collaboration with the appropriate partner agencies and organizations, develop clear plans to engage volunteers, including AmeriCorps members, in preparing for and responding to disasters and other emergencies, including acts of terrorism. Following a large-scale, community-wide emergency, well-coordinated strategies are needed to utilize spontaneous and trained volunteers to meet a community's immediate needs. CSC seeks programs that train community members and build capacity for volunteers to respond effectively following a disaster.

CSC strongly encourages all programs to provide the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training to all AmeriCorps members to enable them to be a resource for their families, neighbors, and the organizations in which they serve. This training takes approximately 20 hours to complete and includes basic First Aid, as well as procedures for responding to all hazards. Depending on your community, this training ranges from free to \$45 per individual trained. Contact your local county operational area or office of emergency services to locate a CERT training provider. In your community, the program may have a different (but related) name such as NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team). In the event that CERT training resources are not available in your community, CSC strongly encourages programs to provide standard First Aid/CPR (including infant/child/adult) training to members.

To learn more about established emergency response networks, contact your local city or county emergency management office or the regional office of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) which can be located through the OES website at [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov). Other contacts include Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), whose members include traditional nonprofit relief organizations such as the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army, and first responder organizations, such as fire/rescue and police/sheriff departments.

CSC is the state Point of Contact for Citizen Corps, a program of the USA Freedom Corps. Citizen Corps Councils work to coordinate efforts among first responders, such as police and fire departments, with relief organizations as well as service and volunteer organizations that organize volunteers for disaster assistance. A local Citizen Corps Council may exist in your community. More information regarding Citizen Corps is available on the CSC website – [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov).





## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

AmeriCorps strengthens communities by involving people directly in meeting community needs.

AmeriCorps members meet *Strengthening Communities* objectives in many ways, including performance of capacity building activities (including volunteer recruitment and support) and community awareness events such as national service days. Although programs have the option of engaging members in broader capacity building activities, all applicants are required to include a volunteer recruitment and/or support component in their program design.

CSC will accept applications from programs that wish to focus member service activities solely on volunteer management capacity building activities. Applicants interested in participating in this pilot initiative should consult page 27 for more information.

- **Capacity Building.** Historically, AmeriCorps members have served in direct service roles such as tutoring, while AmeriCorps\*VISTA members have served in capacity building roles such as fundraising. Recently, both CSC and the Corporation have adopted policies that enable AmeriCorps members to serve in a range of capacity building activities. These capacity building activities impact programs and organizations that benefit from increased ability to provide services in their communities. However, CSC also values the traditional direct service focus of AmeriCorps. To preserve this focus while providing programs with a measure of flexibility, CSC limits capacity building activities to 10 percent of AmeriCorps member time. **Although this flexibility exists, programs are not required to conduct capacity building activities beyond volunteer recruitment and support.**

Individual AmeriCorps members may not spend more than 10 percent of their term of service engaged in capacity building activities. Activities subject to this restriction include fundraising, partnership development and conducting general community outreach. A program that utilizes members in capacity building activities must track and report on the number of hours members spend on such activities. Further, such programs must develop an outcome measure, to be reported on in the *Strengthening Communities* program design category.

Further, members engaged in fundraising activities must abide by the following restrictions:

- Member fundraising activities must be in support of the program's identified community need, and may not include fundraising activities that provide benefit to the placement site's general operating budget or endowment or that of other programs sponsored by the placement site;
  - Members may not fundraise for required matching funds necessary to cover member support costs (living allowances, FICA, worker's compensation, or health insurance) for the program year in which they serve or for future program years;
  - Members may not prepare grant applications for funding provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service or *any other federal agency*; and,
  - Members may not participate in fundraising activities unless specifically outlined in the position description and agreed to by the member.
- **Recruitment and Support of Volunteers.** While AmeriCorps members and "traditional" volunteers have much in common, a distinction has been frequently made between the two. More often than not, AmeriCorps members serve intensively over a period of one or two years, while traditional volunteers



commonly, but not always, serve less intensively. Though this distinction can be unclear, for years AmeriCorps programs have demonstrated the benefits of integrating the efforts of AmeriCorps members and volunteers.

Interest continues to grow in expanding the efforts of AmeriCorps to increase volunteer engagement and effectiveness. With the President's call for all Americans to serve two years – 4,000 hours – in their lifetimes, AmeriCorps has been charged with making volunteer recruitment and management a major focus of its efforts. Research conducted both nationally and statewide has revealed a great untapped interest in volunteering constrained by limited capacity to recruit, manage, and ensure meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Both CSC and the Corporation have adopted policies that reflect an increased emphasis on the recruitment and support of volunteers by AmeriCorps programs. By creating volunteer opportunities and helping organizations to effectively engage volunteers, AmeriCorps programs multiply their impact, build organizational capacity, and support the development of sustainable programs.

CSC policies require that all AmeriCorps programs and applicants include a volunteer recruitment component in their program design. Programs may also choose to engage members in volunteer support activities. **Volunteer recruitment** is defined as recruiting community volunteers to participate in program-associated activities at the site of the legal applicant, placement sites, or partnering organizations. **Volunteer support** activities are those in which community volunteers recruited by the program or another organization are trained, given ongoing support, and provided with volunteer recognition upon the completion of their volunteer commitment. **Programs are only required to recruit volunteers, but are encouraged to do both.** Programs that include both a volunteer recruitment and support component will receive greater consideration in the grantee selection process.

As part of their service activities, AmeriCorps members must engage community volunteers. This can be achieved by all members of the program participating in these activities or by a few members dedicated solely to this activity. Programs may decide that a few members in a program should be devoted entirely to some aspect of volunteer recruitment and support. Or, programs may determine that all members will spend a portion of their time recruiting and supporting volunteers. Programs can utilize AmeriCorps members in a wide variety of ways. For example, AmeriCorps members may be responsible for:

- enlisting, training, coordinating and supervising volunteers;
- helping an organization develop effective volunteer management systems that include clear position descriptions, screening and matching techniques, and volunteer policy and procedure manuals;
- understanding how to assess and provide for accommodations for some volunteers; or,
- promoting retention of volunteers by planning recognition events or providing ongoing support to ensure that volunteers have a high quality experience.

All programs are required to post their volunteer opportunities on the California Volunteer Matching Network. For more information, see page 63.



All members participating in volunteer recruitment and support activities must receive training in best practices associated with volunteer recruitment and support. A program cannot meet the volunteer recruitment and support requirement without engaging AmeriCorps members in these activities.

Volunteers may be recruited for one-time events or episodic events such as national service days, or long-term volunteer commitments. **However, programs that engage community volunteers in long-term volunteer commitments will receive greater consideration in the grantee selection process.** Further, members may also create opportunities for the beneficiaries of their service to volunteer, including service-learning opportunities. Examples include:

- AmeriCorps members in a teacher corps program engage their students in service-learning projects that support classroom learning and provide students with volunteer experience;
- An AmeriCorps environmental program designates a small number of members as volunteer managers who focus their efforts on recruiting and supporting volunteers who assist members with ongoing community stewardship (i.e., water quality activities);
- AmeriCorps members tutoring in an afterschool program recruit volunteers to read with students once a week so that the program can serve additional students; and,
- An entire corps of AmeriCorps members is dedicated to serving as volunteer coordinators at various local host sites to assist these organizations in recruiting, training, and managing volunteers (applicants of this type should apply through the Volunteer Management Capacity Pilot).

Volunteers may be recruited to support activities that are consistent with the community need identified in the program application. The activities for which volunteers are recruited must be consistent with allowable AmeriCorps member service activities. While on AmeriCorps service time, members may not recruit or support volunteers who are engaged in activities prohibited by AmeriCorps regulations. Please see page 38 for more information regarding prohibited member service activities.

Programs that feel that the inclusion of a volunteer recruitment component is inconsistent with their program design may apply for a waiver. Criteria for granting a waiver include:

- A program model in which members are engaged as professionals, such as teachers, attorneys, nurses, etc., and recruiting volunteers would detract from their professional tasks; or,
- A program model in which the location or physical nature of member service activities prevents effective volunteer recruitment and/or support.

Waivers will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and only via recommendation from staff and approval by the CSC Program Committee.

More information regarding volunteer recruitment and management is available on page 62.

- **Volunteer Mobilization Pilot.** CSC will accept applications, as part of its Volunteer Mobilization Pilot, from partnerships that wish to focus member service activities solely on volunteer recruitment and support activities. Applications for the pilot will be reviewed separately from direct service applicants.



The purpose of CSC's Volunteer Mobilization Pilot is to enhance the ability of local organizations (faith-based and secular community-based organizations, schools, universities, municipal departments, etc.) to impact community needs through the effective management of volunteers.

Recent research has shown that there are relatively low rates of volunteerism in states throughout the country, including California. This trend represents a significant opportunity for the service and volunteerism field as use of volunteers can be an effective strategy for delivering services and addressing unmet needs. Through the Volunteer Mobilization Pilot, AmeriCorps programs will provide assistance to a variety of organizations that provide direct services, ranging from those who already have an established volunteer program to those that would like to use volunteers, but lack the ability to effectively do so.

All Volunteer Mobilization Pilot programs must have two required elements: a volunteer generation component and a volunteer infrastructure component.

Through the volunteer generation component, AmeriCorps members would work with volunteer host organizations that have established high-quality volunteer programs, but would be able to provide more and/or better services if they had additional volunteers. At a minimum, members in Pilot programs must recruit volunteers and refer them to volunteer host organizations. Either members or host organizations could screen, match, orient and train these volunteers. The host organizations would then assume responsibility for supervising, supporting and recognizing volunteers referred by AmeriCorps members.

Through the Pilot's volunteer infrastructure component, programs would focus on creating the capacity for local organizations to establish and/or effectively manage their own volunteer programs. Although member activities would depend on the specific circumstances of each organization, the common objective of Pilot programs would be to enhance local volunteer programs' ability to provide more and/or better services through volunteers. For example, a member might develop volunteer management systems (recruitment plans, screening procedures, training plans) or create manuals in order to institutionalize a volunteer program in an organization that does not currently have one. Members might also strengthen systems in organizations with fledgling volunteer programs.

Organizations that would be particularly suitable as applicants for the Volunteer Mobilization Pilot are those that regularly act as clearinghouses to recruit, match and/or manage volunteers on behalf of local community organizations and/or schools. For example, a Volunteer Center might field requests from nonprofit organizations seeking volunteer assistance (nonprofit organizations with neighborhood cleanup projects, schools with service-learning activities or tutoring programs, etc.), recruit volunteers from the community at large and match these volunteers to appropriate projects. Specific organizations that might apply through the Pilot include local Volunteer Centers, Hands On Network (formerly the City Cares Network) affiliates, local United Way chapters, mentoring programs or associations, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) sponsors and school district or county office of education service-learning offices.

In recognition of differences in program design that may be necessary for Pilot programs to succeed, CSC will provide Pilot programs with an exemption to its requirements regarding:

- *Performance Measures* – Pilot programs are exempt from the direct service impact requirement (i.e., programs must demonstrate that they have brought about significant change



in service beneficiaries) which applies to other AmeriCorps programs in California. Instead, Pilot programs must focus their efforts entirely on the *Strengthening Communities* component of program design.

- **Number of Members per Site** – Members must receive ongoing support at their placement sites and be connected to members and staff from the larger program but may be deployed individually to service sites rather than in teams of two or more.

While Pilot programs are eligible to receive these exemptions, their applications must articulate a compelling description of how the volunteer generation and infrastructure activities of the program will meet the critical, local community need identified in the narrative. Pilot programs must also provide members with the training, supervision, and other support needed to effectively meet program performance measures.

**Applicants for the Volunteer Mobilization Pilot must request separate program narrative instructions for the Pilot by contacting CSC at (916) 322-2210 or sending a request to [funding@csc.ca.gov](mailto:funding@csc.ca.gov).**

- **Participation in National and State Days of Service.** As part of the National Service Network, AmeriCorps programs have a number of opportunities to take part in national service days. Since these days of service are national or statewide in scope, they create a strong platform for promoting volunteerism and conveying to volunteers – including AmeriCorps members – that they are participants in a larger movement that extends beyond their local program and community. National service days provide programs a mechanism by which to raise the profile of their program in the community and engage community volunteers to participate in service events. **CSC requires that all AmeriCorps programs participate in All AmeriCorps Week (March 14-24 2007), as well as either Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service (January 15, 2007) or Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning (March 31, 2007).** Programs are encouraged to participate in other days of service such as National Youth Service Day, National Volunteer Week, Join Hands Day, One Day's Pay, Make a Difference Day, and National Family Volunteer Day. Grant funds to support program involvement in such service days are often available from corporate sponsors. Please visit the Points of Light Foundation website – [www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons](http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons) – for more information regarding National Service Days.

## MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

AmeriCorps expands opportunities, helping those who help America. Through AmeriCorps, members develop additional skills, gain valuable experience, and receive education awards that they can use to repay qualified school loans or for future education.

To help ensure that members are prepared for and benefit from their service, applicants are required to include plans for member recruitment and training in their applications, including skills training for service activities. Applicants are encouraged to include leadership development and other training designed to have a long-term positive impact on members, including opportunities to explore educational and career choices. Further, training should reflect the unique nature of the program and be appropriate for the age, skill level, and other differences in the backgrounds of members.

By the end of their term of service, AmeriCorps members should have opportunities to:



- discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and institutions most effective in improving community conditions;
  - develop the skills to help plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs and emergencies;
  - foster within themselves and others positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good;
  - increase life and/or employment skills; and,
  - gain a greater appreciation and understanding of those from different backgrounds.
- **Member Training Plans.** Members must receive an initial member orientation and training that includes information regarding the community in which they serve, the history of national service, expectations of members, and specific training to prepare for the service they will provide. Whether member activities involve tutoring children in reading, housing provision and improvement, or neighborhood/community enhancement, members need to learn the basic skills and technical information associated with good practice before they perform service. In addition, members must receive ongoing training that supplements their initial orientation and provides added depth to their service experience. Training that must be included in the training plan:
    - *Member Orientation* – history of national service, introduction to AmeriCorps, member contract, payroll/benefits, member expectations, key staff and other introductions, etc.
    - *Initial Member Training* – community overview, design of program, program-specific training related to member service activities, team building, diversity training, etc.
    - *Site Specific Orientation* – overview of placement site, introduction of key contacts, policies and procedures for placement site;
    - *Ongoing Training* – additional program-specific training related to member service activities, volunteer recruitment and support training, ethic of service/civic responsibility, etc.
    - *Life After AmeriCorps* – training to help members transition from the AmeriCorps experience, including resume writing, interview skills, non-profit and public sector job resources, graduate school programs, using the education award, etc. Resources to assist with this training are available from the Corporation; and,
    - *Ethic of Service/Civic Responsibility* – All members must participate in specialized training to develop a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility. Please see below for more information regarding requirements.
  - **Ethic of Service/Civic Responsibility.** The Corporation believes that developing an ethic of service and civic responsibility are key ingredients in the lives of every AmeriCorps member and AmeriCorps program. Programs will provide training for their members and use the service experience to help them acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for active civic engagement.

AmeriCorps programs have the flexibility to determine the specific methods and materials used to conduct civic education training; however, successful applicants will describe which materials or curriculum they intend to use in this component of member development. To assist programs, the Corporation has developed *The Citizenship and Member Development Toolkit*, which is available online at [www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/citizenship/toolkit.php](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/citizenship/toolkit.php).





In designing a civic education program for AmeriCorps members, applicants should be aware of the activities prohibited to staff and members while they are supported by AmeriCorps or other Corporation funding. These include attempting to influence legislation, engaging in partisan political activities, and participating in, or endorsing, activities that include advocacy for or against political parties. For more information on these and other prohibited activities, refer to page 38.

Programs may wish to use service-learning principles in conducting the ethic of service/civic responsibility portion of their member training plan. Service-learning is a teaching method by which service activities and the educational components of the program are integrated to provide context and structured learning. For more information regarding service-learning, please see Appendix E.

- ***Other Member Training Elements.*** Programs may also wish to include the following elements in their plans for ongoing training:
  - *Conflict Management* – Training for effectively managing conflict;
  - *Support Services* – Programs are **required** to assist members who have not completed high school in earning the equivalent of a high school diploma (GED). Programs are encouraged to support GED efforts that are clearly linked to higher education opportunities.
  - *Accommodations* – Programs are encouraged to identify types of accommodations and universal design features they plan to employ, and ways in which they will respond to requests for accommodations;
  - *Communication Skills* – Skill development that assists members in becoming more effective communicators;
  - *Teambuilding* – Activities that help build a team environment and esprit de corps among members with diverse attitudes, knowledge, skills and life experience;
  - *Leadership Development* – Training that assists members in developing leadership skills;
  - *Diversity Training* – Training that helps members appreciate the differences among and between team members and the larger community;
  - *First Aid/CPR* – Programs are encouraged to train members in standard first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR);
  - *CERT Training* – Please see page 24 for more information regarding CERT training. This training includes basic first aid and CPR;
  - *Career Exploration* – Training and education that allows members to explore career opportunities in areas such as child development, teaching, public health, or public safety.



## ISSUES RELATED TO AMERICORPS MEMBERS

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Well-qualified and prepared AmeriCorps members are essential to the success of any quality AmeriCorps program. Programs are responsible for the recruitment and training of their members, and are encouraged to recruit members that reflect the characteristics of the communities in which they serve.

### MEMBER TERMS OF SERVICE

Programs may engage members on a full-time or part-time basis. Full-time members must serve at least 1,700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than one year. Each full-time member represents one Member Service Year (MSY). Other member positions and their MSY conversions are as follows:

| Term of Service   | Minimum Number of Hours | MSY Conversion | Number of Members per MSY |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Full-time         | 1,700                   | 1.0 MSY        | 1                         |
| Half-time         | 900                     | 0.5 MSY        | 2                         |
| Reduced half-time | 675                     | 0.375 MSY      | 2.67                      |
| Quarter-time      | 450                     | 0.25 MSY       | 4                         |
| Minimum-time      | 300                     | 0.2 MSY        | 5                         |

### SELECTING MEMBER SERVICE POSITIONS

A key element of program design is selecting the number and type of member service positions to be utilized by the program. In making such decisions, applicants should consider the type of service to be provided (watershed restoration, mentoring, volunteer recruitment, etc.), the hours during which service can be provided (during the school day, afterschool, weekends, etc.), and the number of service hours needed to make a demonstrable impact on the identified community need in one year.

Originally, AmeriCorps members committed a year of their life to service through a full-time or half-time member position. These terms of service provided individuals with an intensive service experience as they served an average of 20-40 hours per week. Since its founding, AmeriCorps has developed additional terms of service (reduced half-time, quarter-time, and minimum-time) to provide programs and potential members with additional flexibility. This flexibility has provided many individuals, including college students, the opportunity to serve on a part-time, less intensive basis while pursuing other interests or commitments. CSC continues to support the usage of all member terms of service. However, in light of the former problems with the National Service Trust which limited the number of member positions available nationwide during the last several program years, CSC encourages programs to select the most intensive service position that will meet the needs of the program and its potential members.

Programs that wish to utilize reduced half-time, quarter-time, and minimum-time positions should note the specific recommendations for their use in the table below. Programs that use such positions must ensure that the positions provide members intensive service experiences. For example, CSC will not support the use of a 300-hour position in a program where a member would serve 300 hours over the course of a calendar year, unless that member has special circumstances (e.g., is a full-time college student).





| Term of Service   | Minimum Number of Hours | Recommendations for Use   |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Full-time         | 1,700                   |   |
| Half-time         | 900                     |   |
| Reduced half-time | 675                     |   |
| Quarter-time      | 450                     | College students, afterschool programs, summer programs, others with similar program design needs |
| Minimum-time      | 300                     | College students, summer programs, others with similar program design needs                       |

Designing positions in this manner enables members to experience the intensive terms of service that AmeriCorps was designed to provide. Further, it ensures that members derive the maximum possible benefit from their term of service since, by law, they may only earn two education awards in the course of their lifetime. Each education award – regardless of size – counts against this lifetime limit.

In addition, CSC encourages programs to limit the number of member positions used in program designs. A program using multiple member positions, such as 1,700, 900, and 450 hours, can be difficult to manage as member recruitment and training activities vary considerably for these types of positions.

## MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

- **Member Eligibility Requirements.** An eligible member is an individual that is:

- A US citizen, US national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States;
- At least 17 years of age at the commencement of service; and,
- Have a high school diploma or GED, or agree to obtain one before using an education award; or,

If a member is a US citizen, US national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States and is not at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service, (s)he must:

- Be enrolled in a full-time, year-round youth corps or full-time summer program, and between 16-25, inclusive; or,
- Be enrolled in a program for economically disadvantaged youth and between 16-24, inclusive; and,
- Have been deemed incapable by an independent assessment of obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent.

The program will be required to maintain appropriate documentation to verify eligibility of its members.

## MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Each AmeriCorps program selects its members and the selection criteria may vary. However, programs must conduct their selection processes in a non-partisan, non-political and non-discriminatory manner. Additionally, programs must establish minimum qualifications reflective of the service that members provide. Programs are encouraged to select members who possess leadership potential as well as a



commitment to the goals of national service, regardless of educational level, work experience or economic background.

- **Recruitment.** Member recruitment is the responsibility of the program. Program recruitment strategies vary based on the program's service activities and its essential and preferred qualifications. Most programs find that recruitment is a year-round process. All recruitment materials should identify the position as an AmeriCorps member position and include minimum qualifications and benefits. In addition to local recruitment, programs must list their member service positions as part of the Corporation's online recruitment system, which will also automatically be loaded into the California Volunteer Matching Network. For more information regarding the online recruitment system, please see page 48.

Programs build strong communities when they engage members and staff from different backgrounds in common service. Applicants should actively seek to include members and staff from the communities where the project operates, as well as men and women of various faiths, races, ethnicities, education levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities. Programs must ensure that member positions and activities are accessible to people with disabilities. Applicants that target non-traditional groups or populations with special needs are encouraged to consider appropriate design elements such as use of part-time positions and appropriate modifications of level and type of supports that might be needed to assure successful completion of service for these members. CSC has access to technical assistance providers and has a disability coordinator to assist grantees in providing appropriate accommodations for members with disabilities and determine whether their living allowance might impact their disability benefits. For more information about inclusive recruitment and outreach, applicants can also visit <http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/index.php?page=sectioniv#appendixresources>.

- **Criminal Background Checks.** Programs with members (18 and over) or grant-funded employees who, on a recurring basis, have access to children or to individuals considered vulnerable by the program (i.e., the elderly or individuals who are either physically or mentally disabled), shall, to the extent permitted by state and local law, conduct criminal background checks on these members or employees as part of the overall screening process. Fees associated with obtaining criminal background checks may be included as an expense in the program budget.

## MEMBER BENEFITS

- **Living Allowances.** In the spirit of the National and Community Service Trust Act, AmeriCorps members are provided with a living allowance (monthly stipend) to support basic subsistence costs while dedicating their lives to service. For the 2007-08 program year, each full-time member must receive a minimum living allowance of \$11,100, and may not receive an allowance in excess of \$22,200. Corporation or other federal funds can support up to 85 percent of the minimum living allowance – more information regarding budgeting for living allowances is available in the *Application Forms and Instructions*. *Programs are not required to provide a living allowance to half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, or minimum-time members.* Programs choosing to provide part-time members with living allowances should use the guidelines in the chart below. The minimum living allowance amounts listed for part-time members are prorated as a percentage of the full-time living allowance and are provided for reference only.



| Term of Service    | Minimum Number of Hours | Minimum Living Allowance | Maximum Living Allowance | MSY   | Maximum CNCS/Federal Share |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Full-time          | 1700                    | \$11,100                 | \$22,200                 | 1.000 | \$9,435                    |
| One Year Half-Time | 900                     | \$5,876                  | \$11,750                 | 0.500 | \$4,995                    |
| Reduced Half-Time  | 675                     | \$4,407                  | \$8,815                  | 0.375 | \$3,746                    |
| Quarter-Time       | 450                     | \$2,938                  | \$5,875                  | 0.250 | \$2,498                    |
| Minimum-Time       | 300                     | \$1,958                  | \$3,915                  | 0.200 | \$1,665                    |

Because the minimum living allowance may not fully cover the actual living expenses of members, programs may wish to offer living allowances in excess of the minimum requirements. If you wish to provide a living allowance in excess of the minimum, you must provide a grantee match for all funds over the amount in the column titled "Maximum CNCS/Federal Share." For example, if you would like to provide a living allowance of \$12,000 to your full-time members, you may only request up to \$9,435 per member in Corporation support for the living allowance. You would have to provide a match of \$2,565 per member in non-federal cash. Programs are prohibited from comparing member service hours to an "hourly wage".

Programs seeking exemptions to the member living allowance requirements due to either existence prior to the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act, or their status as residential or professional corps programs should contact CSC.

- **Education Awards.** AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive an education award for up to two terms of service, directly from the Corporation. Education awards are not calculated as part of the program's grant. The following chart shows the relationship between the number of hours an AmeriCorps member serves and the education award the member receives based upon the successful completion of the term of service:

| Term of Service   | Number of Hours | Education Award |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Full-time         | at least 1,700  | \$4,725         |
| Half-time         | at least 900    | \$2,362.50      |
| Reduced half-time | at least 675    | \$1,800         |
| Quarter-time      | at least 450    | \$1,250         |
| Minimum-time      | at least 300    | \$1,000         |

Members may use their education awards up to seven years from completion of service. They may use their awards to pay for any combination of: (1) the costs of attendance at a qualified institution of higher education; (2) the costs of approved school-to-work programs; or, (3) the costs of repaying qualified student loans.

While they serve, members who have outstanding qualified student loans may be eligible for forbearance on their payments. To qualify, they must contact their loan holders. Upon successful completion of a member's terms of service, the Corporation will make payments for interest that accrued during the period of forbearance.



- **Child Care.** Programs must make child care available to any full-time member who is eligible and needs such assistance in order to participate in the program. The Corporation funds child care directly at 100 percent of the allowance defined by payment rates of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). The Corporation can provide technical assistance to programs in determining member eligibility, provider eligibility and the child care allowance. Direct payments are made to child care providers. Member eligibility for child care is based on need:
  - total family income of members must be less than 75 percent of the state median income, as defined by the state under CCDBG guidelines; and,
  - members must reside with and be a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 13.

If members in your program receive child care assistance from other sources such as a parent or guardian, they are ineligible to receive child care from the Corporation. If members become ineligible for assistance due to enrollment in your program, or the member certifies that he or she needs child care in order to participate in the program, your program must provide child care.

- **Health Insurance.** Programs must provide full-time members with health insurance at the time of acceptance into the program if the member is not otherwise covered by a health insurance policy that provides the minimum benefits described below. If a member who previously had coverage loses it through no deliberate act of his or her own, such as parental or spousal job loss, a program must provide the member with basic health insurance that meets the Corporation's requirements.

The Corporation will pay 85 percent of the cost of a policy that meets the requirements below as long as the policy is not excessive in cost. The Corporation does not pay any share of the cost of the policy that does not include the minimum benefits, nor does the Corporation cover any person other than members. In general, the Corporation will not pay the costs of health benefits for half-time members unless they serve full-time for a sustained period of time. For example, members may receive benefits when they serve in a summer program for thirty-five hours per week with other members who receive health benefits.

An AmeriCorps health insurance plan is available for programs that do not have health insurance coverage secured for its members. This plan ranges from \$116–\$146 per month per member. The cost of this plan has risen on an annual basis. For more information on this plan, visit [www.src-web.com/ameriCorps.html](http://www.src-web.com/ameriCorps.html).

### Minimum Benefits

Programs that have health insurance coverage must provide or exceed these minimum benefits:

- *Covered Services:* Physician services for illness or injury, hospital room and board, emergency room, x-ray and laboratory, and prescription drugs;
- *Limited Coverage:* Mental/nervous disorders, substance abuse;
- *Deductible:* Not more than \$250 per individual;
- *Coinsurance:* Member pays no more than 20 percent or alternatively, comparable fixed fee. Exception: mental and substance abuse may require a 50 percent co-payment;
- *Out-of-pocket:* Not more than \$1,000 per individual; and,
- *Maximum Benefit:* At least \$50,000 per occurrence or cause.



## AMERICORPS IDENTITY

As part of a national network, AmeriCorps programs are encouraged to provide resources and experiences to AmeriCorps members that recognize their efforts and demonstrate that they are part of a national movement. Programs can support the development of AmeriCorps identity through the items below, as well as participation in National Service Days.

- **AmeriCorps Pledge/Swearing-In.** Programs are required to provide members with opportunities to collectively take the AmeriCorps pledge or similar oath when they begin their term of service. Programs are encouraged to do this during a Swearing-In Ceremony following the completion of member orientation and initial training. In addition, programs may wish to collaborate with other programs in their area to conduct large-scale Swearing-In Ceremonies.
- **Service Gear.** For the purposes of local and national identity, programs should provide an AmeriCorps uniform, which incorporates the AmeriCorps logo. Programs may use grant funds to pay for a standard Service Gear package (AmeriCorps t-shirt, sweatshirt, hat, pin, decals and buttons) for members. The standard Service Gear package is priced at \$35. Programs are encouraged to provide this package to members. Many AmeriCorps members serve in settings where a shirt with a collar is more appropriate attire. The Corporation recognizes that for purposes of credibility, it is important that members have appropriate clothes in order to perform their service. Therefore, if members need a shirt with a collar, programs may include an additional amount of up to \$35, for a maximum total of \$70 of Corporation funds per member in the budget. In addition, the Corporation will pay up to \$150 per member for additional safety apparel that is necessary for members to perform their daily service. When requesting additional funding for service gear, please provide justification in the budget narrative.
- **Recognition/Graduation Ceremonies.** Programs are encouraged to provide recognition to members through Graduation Ceremonies that honor the completion of a term of service, or other similar recognition events throughout the course of the program year.

## MEMBER MANAGEMENT

- **Member Supervision.** As the experience of Corporation programs across the country demonstrates, successful member development and retention depends upon appropriate supervision and coaching. Programs are required to have qualified supervisors to provide members with regular and adequate oversight. Members may not serve as the legal supervisor of other members. Successful applicants will describe plans to provide members with close supervisory support, modeling behavior expected of a member while giving guidance on a consistent basis.

All programs must provide site supervisors with appropriate training, including relevant policies and procedures, prior to the placement of members at the service site. Costs associated with site supervisors, including salary and training, may be charged to the AmeriCorps grant or used as matching funds.



- **Member Performance Reviews.** Programs must conduct and keep a record of at least a midterm and end-of-term written evaluation of each member's performance for full and half-time members and an end-of-term written evaluation for less than half-time members.
- **Grievance Procedures.** Programs must establish a grievance procedure for members who believe that they have been unfairly released and for other grievances filed by members or other interested parties. *The procedures must include an opportunity for a hearing and binding arbitration within statutory deadlines.* Additionally, programs are encouraged to establish an alternative dispute resolution procedure, such as mediation.
- **Member Refill Policy.** On occasion, members may leave the program prior to the completion of the program year. Programs who have fully enrolled their awarded member positions may replace any member who terminates service before completing 15 percent of his/her term. Any member who fails to reach this threshold is not eligible for any portion of an education award. Programs may not refill the same member position more than once.

## PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- (1) attempting to influence legislation;
- (2) organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- (3) assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- (4) impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- (5) engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- (6) participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- (7) engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- (8) providing a direct benefit to:
  - (i) a business organized for profit;
  - (ii) a labor union;
  - (iii) a partisan political organization;
  - (iv) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
  - (v) an organization engaged in religious activities unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and,
- (9) such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.



AmeriCorps members may spend up to 10 percent of their term of service engaged in capacity building activities, including fundraising. However, AmeriCorps members engaging in fundraising activities MAY NOT:

- Raise funds that provide benefit to the placement site's general operating budget or endowment or that of other programs sponsored by the placement site;
- Fundraise for required matching funds necessary to cover member support costs (living allowances, FICA, worker's compensation, or health insurance) for the program year in which they serve or for future program years; and,
- Prepare grant applications for funding provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service or any other federal agency.





# GRANT TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

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## PERFORMANCE MEASURES, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, requires applicants for funding to develop measurable performance goals to determine the impact of AmeriCorps on communities and participants. The Corporation is placing increased emphasis on the importance of performance measures as both a program management tool and a means by which to communicate program impact.

- **Performance Measures.** Performance measurement is a systematic way of measuring the amounts of goods produced, services delivered, and benefits experienced by service recipients and communities. Performance measurement can serve as a powerful management tool. It also empowers organizations by helping them demonstrate quantifiable results. As such, strong performance measures are advantageous to applicants as they compete for available funds.

Performance measures represent annual goals for the primary activities of AmeriCorps members. While the narrative section of the application provides an opportunity to describe the compelling, unmet community need and the desired result over the course of the AmeriCorps grant, performance measures track progress on an ongoing basis. It is expected that for each activity a program engages in, a measure of the amount of service provided or number of beneficiaries served can be tracked. Therefore, at a minimum, each performance measure must include an *output* measure and an *outcome target*. These terms are further defined below:

*In the Needs and Service Activities and Strengthening Communities categories, beneficiaries refer to persons or organizations who receive services or benefits from a program, but not to AmeriCorps members or to staff assisting in the operation of the program.*

*Outputs* are the amount or units of service that members or volunteers have completed, or the number of community beneficiaries the program has served. Outputs do not provide information on benefits or other changes in communities or in the lives of beneficiaries. Examples of outputs include the number of people a program tutors, counsels, houses, feeds.

*Outcomes* measure a change that has occurred in the direct beneficiaries (persons, organizations, the environment). Outcomes will indicate that a significant change has occurred. An example of a meaningful outcome is that previously underperforming students have improved their reading scores to grade-level. *CSC values outcomes that quantify long, lasting change related to the identified community need over those that quantify temporary change.*

Target numbers and percentages should represent the intensity and quantity of service hours dedicated to each activity. Each performance measure result will identify an indicator as to whether the program is having the intended effect. Progress toward these indicators will be monitored on an ongoing basis and will be considered in future funding decisions. CSC's performance measurement requirements are summarized as follows:

### *General Requirements*





- Applicants must develop at least one performance measure in each of the program design categories: Needs and Service Activities, Member Development, and Strengthening Communities.
- Submit performance measures that are achievable at their target levels within a twelve month period;
- Revise performance measures in consultation with CSC staff prior to submission to the Corporation;
- Participate in negotiating performance measures prior to contracting;
- Develop a system for collecting and organizing this performance data on an ongoing basis;
- Include the results in progress and final reports (on a yearly basis); and,
- Utilize data to continuously improve program operations.

#### *Needs and Service Activities*

- Applicants must develop a set of performance measures that account for member's direct service activities.
- Applicants must develop an aligned performance measure (output, intermediate outcome and end outcome) on their primary service activity. Primary service activity is defined as the member service activity for which the greatest number of member service hours (cumulative across the program) are dedicated. The outcome measure must detail a compelling impact on the identified community need.
- Performance measures for activities other than the primary service activity must include an output and outcome measure. Outcomes for these activities should detail an impact on the identified community need.

#### *Member Development*

- Applicants must develop an output and outcome measure related to training provided to members in completing their term of service. For example, 20 members completed the member training plan (initial orientation and training, site-specific training, ongoing training, and Life After AmeriCorps training).
- Applicants are encouraged to develop additional outcomes related to member development, including measures of member mastery of training content based on pre and post evaluations, or measures of the percentage of members who enter specific education programs (such as teacher certification programs) or career paths (public or non-profit careers) following the completion of the term of service.

#### *Strengthening Communities*

- Applicants that propose direct service programs must have a volunteer recruitment performance measure. CSC has developed a standardized volunteer recruitment performance measure that tracks the total number of volunteers that members have directly recruited for service and the number of volunteer hours served. Programs that engage members solely in volunteer recruitment must adopt this performance measure. Programs engaged in both volunteer recruitment and support must adopt the standardized performance measure and track the number of volunteer hours provided by community volunteers.
- Applicants proposing that members engage in capacity building activities beyond the volunteer recruitment requirement must develop a performance measure that includes an output and outcome for each activity. For example, a program who engages members in fundraising activities must develop an output of grant applications submitted and prepared by the AmeriCorps member, and an outcome, such as funding secured. Applicants are reminded that individual AmeriCorps



members may not spend more than 10 percent of their term of service engaged in capacity building.

Minimum performance measure requirements are summarized in the following table:

|                                     | Output                                       | Outcome  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Needs and Service Activities</b> | Primary Service Activity                     | Primary Service Activity (direct impact on community need) |
|                                     | Other Service Activities                     | Other Service Activities                                   |
| <b>Member Development</b>           | Member Training Plan                         | Direct Impact on Member                                    |
| <b>Strengthening Communities</b>    | Volunteer Recruitment                        |  |
|                                     | Capacity Building Activities (if applicable) | Capacity Building Activities (if applicable)               |

Information on developing performance measures is included in Appendix B on page 58.

During implementation of a grant, performance measures may need to be adjusted based on program experience. Programs selected for funding will negotiate their final performance measures with CSC and/or the Corporation.<sup>2</sup> A program's record of meeting such performance measures will be considered in determining future funding. CSC fully recognizes that performance measures will reflect individual program goals and circumstances, and expects that there will be a wide spectrum of different performance measures across all grantees. CSC recognizes that performance measures alone do not reflect the full scope and impact of AmeriCorps programs. Therefore, these measures are not the only items that will be considered when evaluating an application.

As part of a broader effort to aggregate impact data nationally and in California, the Corporation and CSC may develop a few performance measures in consultation with grantees that will apply to all AmeriCorps programs in 2007.

- **Evaluation.** While performance measurement and evaluation both include systematic data collection and measurement of progress, evaluations use scientifically-based research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of programs. By comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program, evaluations can help programs estimate their impacts.

The National and Community Service Trust Act specifies that an applicant arrange for an evaluation of an AmeriCorps national service program receiving assistance from the Corporation. All grantees – formula and competitive – with average annual grants of \$500,000 must arrange for independent evaluations. Competitive programs that do not meet the \$500,000 threshold are required to complete an internal evaluation. Formula programs with average grants of less than \$500,000 should also plan

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<sup>2</sup> An applicant receiving formula funding will negotiate performance measures with CSC. An organization receiving competitive funds will negotiate performance measures with CSC and the Corporation.



to conduct an internal evaluation. The Corporation defines independent and internal evaluation as follows:

- *Independent evaluation* is that in which scientifically-based research methods are used to assess the effectiveness of programs. Scientifically-based research can be broadly defined as using appropriate research design, methods, and techniques to ensure that the methods used can reliably address the research questions and support the conclusions. Scientifically-based research describes research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to activities and programs. Independent evaluation uses an external evaluator who has no formal or personal relationship with, or stake in, the administration, management or finances of the grantee or of the program to be evaluated
- *Internal evaluation* is an evaluation the program performs in-house without the use of an independent external evaluator.

An applicant for funding must include a summary of its evaluation plan (internal or independent) as part of its program narrative. The plan should include consideration of the program's evaluation question(s), potential methods to be used (control groups, national norms, random assignment, etc.), period of time the evaluation will cover, who will conduct evaluation (internal evaluator, outside consultant, program partner, etc.), and how the evaluation will be funded. Further, program budgets should include evidence of plans to conduct an evaluation. Expenses related to evaluations are allowable grant expenses. In addition, grantees may wish to develop partnerships with institutions of higher education for evaluation expertise and assistance.

Future applications for continuation funding (for the 2010-11 program year) must include a completed evaluation that covers a minimum of one year. Applicants are strongly encouraged to evaluate program activities so that evaluation results are available for submission with the recompetes application (approximately October of 2009). Both CSC and the Corporation will consider such evaluation studies when making judgments about a program's application for future funding.

Currently recompetes programs must provide a summary of any evaluation studies completed on the AmeriCorps program during the last three completed program years as part of the application package to CSC. See the *Application Forms and Instructions* for information on how to submit such materials.

- **Reporting Requirements.** Programs are required to electronically submit quarterly programmatic progress reports that detail their accomplishments and impacts to date.



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- **Grantee Support for Programs.** AmeriCorps grants provide funding for member support costs and program operating costs. Programs must provide, account for, and document all financial support for programs. AmeriCorps funding can be used for up to:
  - 85 percent of member support costs, including the minimum living allowance, FICA, worker's compensation, and health insurance; and,
  - 67 percent of program operating costs, including staff, evaluation, administration, and other operating costs.

All other costs must be provided for by the grantee in the form of matching funds. Minimum matching funds requirements come in three forms and are detailed below:

- Member Support Costs (non-federal cash);
- Program Operating Costs (cash or in-kind, federal or non-federal); and,
- Overall Share (aggregate amount a grantee contributes to program).

|                         | Year 1<br>(%) | Year 2<br>(%) | Year 3<br>(%) | Year 4<br>(%) | Year 5<br>(%) | Year 6<br>(%) | Year 7<br>(%) | Year 8<br>(%) | Year 9<br>(%) | Year 10<br>(%) |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Minimum Member Support  | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15             |
| Minimum Operating Costs | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33            | 33             |
| Minimum Overall Share   | N/A           | N/A           | N/A           | 26            | 30            | 34            | 38            | 42            | 46            | 50             |

In years 1 through 3 that an organization receives a grant, it is required only to meet the minimum 15 percent member support and 33 percent program operational costs match requirements.

Recompeting programs that were either funded for the first time in the 2003-04 program year, or were funded prior to 2003-04, will enter the 2007-08 program year as a year 5 program.

The match for member support costs (excluding health insurance) must be in non-federal cash. Please note that common federal funding sources, such as federal college work-study, cannot be used to meet minimum match requirements for member support costs. Programs must demonstrate all cash match support from partners via Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that are required as part of the contracting process with CSC.

Programs may provide their share of operating costs and overall match through cash or in-kind resources, and may use non-Corporation federal funds, as permitted by the other federal agency. Such matching funds must be verifiable; not included as match for other federal programs; be necessary and reasonable for the purpose of your program; be approved for match usage in writing by



the other federal funding agency; and, be allowable under OMB cost principles. Matching funds must be secured on an annual basis.

The legal applicant is the entity responsible for meeting matching funds requirements. The legal applicant may request that partnering organizations provide a share of the match necessary to meet matching funds requirements. Applicants must demonstrate sufficient match to meet the minimum requirements, but are advised not to include in the budget match in excess of the minimum if sources are uncertain. Failure to secure matching funds identified in the budget may result in adverse audit findings in addition to negatively affecting future grant applications to the Corporation.

Both CSC and the Corporation encourage programs to exceed the minimum match levels and to secure greater support from state and local funding sources, including private sources such as corporations, foundations, individuals, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations. In particular, the Corporation places greater value on non-federal matching funds due to direction received from Congress that the Corporation should increase the level of matching funds provided by the private sector.

The selection criteria for grant applications include 25 percent for Cost Effectiveness/ Budget Adequacy (see page 53). In its grant selection process, CSC will evaluate a program's match by considering:

- The percentage of match that has been secured by the time of the written application (or, for new applicants, well-developed plans for securing match);
  - The percentage of matching resources contributed over and above the required amount;
  - The extent to which matching resources offset core program costs (e.g., in-kind services from a professional evaluator, as opposed to a more attractive training venue); and,
  - The diversity of match sources.
- **Indirect Administration.** Grantees can choose one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a Corporation Fixed Percentage method (Option A) **OR** a Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate method (Option B). Under Option A, an applicant may request no more than 5 percent of the grant award for indirect administration, including 1 percent that will be withheld by CSC for administration and grant processing. By accepting the fixed 5 percent indirect cost rate, the applicant may include as grantee match for administration the amount resulting after multiplying the sum of all federally-funded direct costs plus the total of all grantee-funded direct costs by 10 percent. Both the 5 percent federal share and the 10 percent grantee match contribution may be applied without any supporting documentation and in lieu of a formally approved indirect cost rate.

If you use Option B, you must include a copy of your approved Indirect Cost Rate with your application. Please note that the Federal Administrative Maximum is only 5 percent under both options. The benefit of Option B is the ability to include a higher Grantee Administrative match amount based on your Indirect Cost Rate. Additional information regarding calculating indirect cost rates is available in the *Application Forms and Instructions*.

When entering into a contract with a grantee, CSC will provide for up to the maximum allowable indirect cost rate, per these guidelines, that is available to the legal applicant for the AmeriCorps funding. Although legal applicants may subgrant any portion of the terms of the contract, including fiscal



management, to a subgrantee, the contract will reflect the maximum allowable indirect cost rate per the legal status of the legal applicant.

- **Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements.** As with all federal grant programs, it is the responsibility of all grantees to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. Under the Corporation's regulations, each grantee must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of its program. To meet this requirement, programs must have adequate accounting practices and procedures, internal controls, audit trails, and cost allocation procedures. OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations, requires all organizations to have A-133 financial audits if they annually expend \$500,000 or more under federal awards. This requirement applies to the organization's total expenditures each fiscal year under all of its federal awards, not just an AmeriCorps grant.

As with all federal grant programs, programs must ensure that their activities, including those of any subgrantees, will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. Programs must obtain assurances of such compliance prior to extending federal financial assistance to subgrantees. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving member services under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. See the grant provisions for specific requirements.

- **Grant Awards.** Successful applicants will enter into a multi-year award agreement; however, funding will be provided at the outset only for the first year of the program. Neither the Corporation nor CSC has any obligation to provide additional funding in subsequent years. Funding for the second and third years of an approved program is contingent upon the availability of funds, adequate performance including satisfactory progress toward the approved performance measures, submission of proposed changes in activities or objectives, a detailed budget and budget narrative for the applicable program year, and any other criteria established in the award agreement.

Programs may not enroll members prior to receipt of a grant award from the Corporation. Programs will be liable for all member support costs associated with members who begin service prior to the receipt of a grant award. Further, hours accrued by members prior to the receipt of a grant award will not count towards hours necessary for earning an education award. Programs will be notified by their CSC program associate that a grant award has been received and that they may begin enrolling members.

Prior to the receipt of a grant award, approved programs may receive pre-award authorization to begin incurring non-member related support costs, including staffing, member recruitment costs, participation in CSC training events, etc. Pre-award authorization is typically given in July of each year.

- **Contracts and Invoicing.** CSC anticipates that contracts for the first year of the grant award will run from July 1, 2007 – December 31, 2008. *Although the contract spans 18 months, the program budget will only cover a 12-month period.* All expenses are reimbursed through the submission of invoices to CSC following the receipt of an executed contract. Invoices will not be paid until an executed contract between CSC and the grantee is in place. An executed contract may not be in place until well into the contract period. Following the receipt of an executed contract, grantees may invoice for expenses on a



monthly basis. Grantees must demonstrate matching funds with each invoice. On average, grantees will receive reimbursement within 30 days of submitting a properly completed invoice. Applicants are advised that they may need to pursue a line of credit in order to cover program start-up costs prior to the receipt of the first invoice payment.

- **Maximum Funding per Member Service Year (MSY).** New and experienced applicants, as well as previously funded and current programs entering the second–fourth years of operation, may request up to \$15,675 per Member Service Year (MSY). Based on the belief that existing programs should receive increased community support over time, the maximum amount of funding that CSC will provide per MSY decreases over time according to the following schedule:

| Entering Year of AmeriCorps Funding | Maximum Cost per MSY |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1-4                                 | \$15,675             |
| 5                                   | \$15,215             |
| 6                                   | \$14,755             |
| 7                                   | \$14,295             |
| 8                                   | \$13,735             |
| 9                                   | \$13,375             |
| 10                                  | \$12,915             |
| 11                                  | \$12,455             |
| 12                                  | \$11,995             |
| 13                                  | \$11,535             |
| 14                                  | \$11,075             |
| 15                                  | \$10,615             |

For example, a recompeting program that has been operating continuously since the 2003-04 program year would have a maximum cost per MSY of \$15,215 for the 2007-08 program year.

Applicants that request less AmeriCorps funding per MSY are at a substantial competitive advantage, all else being equal. ***The cost per MSY will be considered as one of the major criterion for the Cost Effectiveness/Budget Adequacy portion of an applicant's score.*** The statewide cost per MSY average of all programs in CSC's 2006-07 portfolio is approximately \$10,007.

- **Education Award Only Positions.** In some instances, applicants may wish to include in their application a request for education awards for positions that are pre-existing AmeriCorps-like positions. These types of positions are more common among local and state conservation corps programs. Applicants requesting such positions may do so as part of their application; however, such positions will be reimbursed at a rate up to \$1,000 per MSY, rather than the maximums outlined in the Cost per MSY policy. Applicants must ensure that their budgets reflect this policy. In addition, programs may only seek reimbursement for such positions if members are enrolled.





## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Grantees are required to secure and/or maintain reliable access to electronic mail and the Internet as part of their grant. The majority of reporting requirements and communications to grantees are completed through the Internet and electronic mail. Applicants without sufficient access to computers and related hardware may budget for such items in their funding request. Please see the *Application Forms and Instructions* for more information regarding budgeting information.

- **Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS).** Programs that receive AmeriCorps grants must make use of the Corporation's Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS) to enroll AmeriCorps members and track their service hours, and track accomplishment data in order to submit progress reports. AmeriCorps Progress Reports (quarterly), Periodic Expense Reports (monthly), and Financial Status Reports (quarterly) are all submitted using WBRS. Use of WBRS requires a computer with access to the Internet.
- **eGrants.** The Corporation is working with other federal agencies to simplify federal grantmaking processes and provide access to federal activities over the Internet. The Corporation has developed a grants management system, known as *eGrants*, that includes online grant applications, grant awards, and reporting. *Applicants that are selected to participate in the CSC Staff Interview process will receive information regarding entering their applications into the eGrants system prior to submission to the Corporation.*
- **Recruitment Tools and Resources.** In order to supplement grantees' local recruiting efforts, and to ensure that the information in the nationwide system is comprehensive and of maximum benefit to individuals who want to become AmeriCorps members, use of the online AmeriCorps recruitment system, found on the AmeriCorps website - [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org) - is mandatory for all AmeriCorps programs. This system allows AmeriCorps programs to post information about their programs and member assignments, search for prospective members, and contact members to provide information or schedule interviews.

Member position information posted to the national AmeriCorps recruitment system will also be displayed on the California Volunteer Matching Network.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- **Staffing Requirement.** All grantees must maintain, at a minimum, one full-time staff member whose primary responsibilities are to administer the AmeriCorps program – grant funds can be utilized for such expenses. In most instances, additional staff will be needed to assure a high-quality program, including fiscal and clerical staff.
- **Monitoring and Management Responsibilities.** Programs are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the grant and sub-grant-supported activities to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements and achievement of programmatic goals. Monitoring must cover each program, function, or activity. Programs are responsible for ensuring program quality and that the program has an impact on the problems facing the communities in which it operates. This includes monitoring the service of members. Programs are responsible for the timely and accurate documentation of member eligibility and service hours. Each program should develop systems that closely track and monitor these requirements.



- **CSC-sponsored Training Events.** Each year, CSC hosts an AmeriCorps training event to provide tools and resources, as well as review program requirements for the upcoming program year. This training is usually three days in length and is held in late July or early August. Typically, programs are required to send three individuals associated with the program (Program Director, Program Assistant, Site Supervisors, Fiscal Staff, etc.), and are encouraged to send more. Programs may use up to \$2,000 in Corporation funds to attend required training events. Programs will likely need to budget additional funds and may count such funds as match.
- **Supplementation.** AmeriCorps funds should be used to supplement existing funds. AmeriCorps funding cannot be used to supplant, i.e., replace existing funds.
- **Non-duplication.** Grant funds may not be used to duplicate services that are available in the locality of the program or project. The grantee may not conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a state or local government agency in which the grantee entity resides.
- **Non-displacement.** The grantee may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages or employment benefits, as a result of a member serving in a program or project.
- **Federal College Work-Study and Student Service.** The Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998 requires that all institutions of higher education who receive federal college work-study (FWS) funds utilize a minimum of 7 percent of their total FWS budget for community service placements. Each college must also include a literacy component that is defined in regulations by the U.S. Department of Education.

Community service activities undertaken using FWS can be a valuable resource for national service programs. While the FWS program is administered by college financial aid offices, many colleges have built strong relationships between the community service, service-learning, or volunteer office and the financial aid office to enhance community service efforts of the campus. Some service offices even manage the community service FWS program on their campus. Both service offices and community partners can assist the financial aid office in enhancing community service FWS programs. For more information on the FWS for Community Service program, please visit [www.ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/currentFWSGuidePag.jsp](http://www.ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/currentFWSGuidePag.jsp).

Programs sponsored by higher education institutions **MUST** describe their institution's efforts to support community service under FWS. Specifically include the percentage of your school's 2005-06 FWS funds that were used for community service placements and your plans for further efforts in this area. This information will be used when considering your application.



# REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

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## SELECTION TIMELINE

### **2006**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| September 12              | Request for Proposals (RFA) available  |
| September 12 – October 27 | Technical Assistance Period – please see page 52                                   |
| September 18 – 22         | RFA Overview Sessions  |
| October 13                | Notice of Intent to Apply due to CSC   |
| October 27                | Applications Due – applications must be <b><u>received</u></b> by CSC by 5:00 p.m. |
| November 6 – 9            | Peer Review Process  |
| November 17               | Invitations to Staff Interview Issued  |
| November 29 – December 8  | CSC Staff Interviews   |
| December 18               | Preliminary Funding Decisions Announced  |

### **2007**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| January 1 – 19 | Competitive Applicants Prepare for National Competition |
| Early June     | Final Grant Decisions Announced                         |
| July/August    | CSC AmeriCorps Training (3-day, tentative)              |
| August 14      | Projected Program Start Date                            |

This timeline is tentative and is subject to change due to Corporation announcements and other events.

## SELECTION PROCESS

Both CSC and the Corporation typically receive far more in funding requests than can be awarded. Applications are selected using an intensive, multi-stage process that includes the CSC peer review process, CSC staff interviews of partnerships, CSC Commission approval, Corporation peer review panels, and review by Corporation staff with approval by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

Following the initial compliance screening, CSC's selection process occurs in two phases. First, during the peer review process, teams of peer reviewers from throughout the state evaluate the basic program



concept against a selection rubric. Those applications that score well in the peer review process will be invited to participate in an interview with CSC staff. The interview process evaluates the commitment of CLASP partners to the program and the ability of the CLASP to implement the proposed program design.

To assure that new applicants have the opportunity to proceed in the selection process, CSC will add 10 percent of the peer review score for new applicants following the peer review process in determining interview invitations. Once invitations have been issued, the 10 percent adjustment will be removed.

CSC's 2006 AmeriCorps planning grantees are not considered new applicants, and will therefore not receive a 10 percent score adjustment.

The scores from the peer review and interview processes are weighted 40 percent and 60 percent respectively, in determining an applicant's final score. In addition, 10 percent of the weighted score will be added to the score of a new applicant (verified by CSC staff) to establish its final score. For example, a new applicant that receives a score of 85 during the peer review process, and an 80 in the staff interview process, would receive a final score of 90.2.

During the staff interview process, CSC staff members will use a 5 point priority scoring system to evaluate each of the federal priorities listed on page 16 of this RFA. Each applicant may receive a maximum of 10 points for priority areas. .

Following the completion of the interview process, two rank order lists will be created. The first will use the final score with the addition of federal priority points to rank applicants for submission in the national competitive process. The second will use the final score to rank applicants for available formula funding. Applicants will appear on both lists, and depending on the priorities their program design addresses, may have different scores on each list.

All applicants, whether applying for competitive or formula funds, must meet a minimum score threshold in order to be considered for funding. Applicants that apply for competitive funds, and do not meet the minimum threshold, will not be forwarded to the national competition. CSC maintains no obligation to provide formula funding to competitive applicants that are not funded through the national competition.

In creating the formula portfolio of programs, CSC considers two primary factors – high quality (as determined by state score) and geographic distribution. CSC seeks to assure that communities throughout the state receive AmeriCorps funding. To achieve this goal, CSC utilizes twelve regions in analyzing geographic distribution. As part of their application package, applicants are asked to identify the counties in which AmeriCorps members will serve. The state's counties are grouped into regions as follows:

- *Central Coast* – Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz;
- *Far North* – Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama;
- *Inland Empire* – Inyo, Riverside, San Bernardino;
- *Los Angeles* – Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura;
- *North and East Bay* – Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Solano, Sonoma;
- *North Coast* – Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Trinity;
- *Northern Interior* – Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Nevada, Sierra, Sutter, Yuba;
- *Sacramento Metro* – El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Yolo;
- *San Diego* – Imperial, San Diego;



- *San Francisco and South Bay* – San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara;
- *Sierra and Northern San Joaquin* – Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Mono, Tuolumne, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus; and,
- *Southern San Joaquin Valley* – Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare.

Mindful of all other considerations, CSC will seek to ensure that through the combination of formula and competitive funds, all regions have a minimum of 20 MSYs with the following exceptions: 40 MSY minimum – Inland Empire, North and East Bay, San Francisco and South Bay, San Diego, and South San Joaquin; 80 MSY minimum – Los Angeles. In any given year, if the funding available to CSC changes, upward or downward, then the minimum MSY requirements for each region will be adjusted proportionately. In the event that this policy cannot be met due to funding and configuration limitations, multi-region and statewide programs will be required to place a minimum number of MSYs in regions that are underrepresented and were identified as member placement regions in the initial application.

CSC will make preliminary announcements in December, which will include those that have been selected to compete in the national competitive process, as well as those that are on a waiting list for formula funding. Applicants that are selected to compete in the national competitive process will be forwarded to the Corporation after receiving feedback collected from the review process by CSC staff. CSC will work with these applicants to submit the final proposal electronically via *eGrants*. The Corporation will make competitive funding decisions following the completion of their review process. CSC will finalize program selections, including the recipients of formula funds, following the Corporation's announcements in May. CSC will send correspondence regarding each applicant's status to the legal applicant following its decisions in December and June.

CSC provides all applicants the opportunity to request a summary of reviewer comments (both peer reviewer and staff) in order to support their continuous improvement efforts. Notification letters sent in December will include instructions for requesting reviewer comments.

CSC does not have an appeals process. Once decisions are rendered, they are final.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO APPLICANTS**

CSC will provide technical assistance to applicants in two primary ways – RFA Overview Sessions and the posting of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the CSC website.

RFA Overview Sessions will review the key elements of completing a proposal with potential applicants. Sessions will be conducted through in-person sessions scheduled for the week of September 18. Additional information regarding times, locations, and registering for the sessions is available on the CSC website at [http://www.csc.ca.gov/grants/current\\_opps.asp](http://www.csc.ca.gov/grants/current_opps.asp).

CSC posts FAQs to ensure that all applicants have access to the same technical assistance. Applicants may submit a question at [http://www.csc.ca.gov/grants/faq\\_ac.asp](http://www.csc.ca.gov/grants/faq_ac.asp). In addition, applicants may leave questions on the CSC AmeriCorps Funding Hotline at (916) 322-2210. Answers to questions received (either via the website FAQ feature or through the hotline) by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday of each week will be posted on the website by Monday of the following week.



The *Get Grants* section of the CSC website will be updated weekly with additional resources to assist applicants in completing their proposals. CSC recommends applicants check the website on a weekly basis for updates.



## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The following selection criteria will be utilized during CSC's selection process. There are variations between the criteria used by CSC and those of the Corporation. Applicants who will participate in the national competition will work with CSC staff to revise their applications to meet the Corporation's selection criteria.

### **Program Design (50 percent total)**

#### *Needs and Service Activities (10 percent)*

- Well-documented compelling community need
- Effective involvement of target community in program planning and implementation
- Well-defined roles for members and community volunteers that target the community need
- Well-designed service activities that target the community need and lead to measurable outcomes or impact
- Evidence of previous program outcomes or impact (recompeting or previous programs)
- Measurable outputs and outcomes

#### *Member Development (20 percent)*

- Effective plans for recruiting members to develop a diverse corps that is reflective of the community to be served
- Effective plans to provide members with training needed to deliver high-quality service
- Well-designed activities that promote an ethic of service and civic responsibility
- Effective plans for providing ongoing member supervision, support and recognition to assist members in successfully completing their term of service
- Evidence of successful member recruitment and support activities (recompeting or previous programs)

#### *Strengthening Communities (20 percent)*

- Well-defined member activities for recruiting and supporting long-term volunteer commitments from community volunteers, with appropriate performance measures
- Strong community partnerships, including well-defined roles for partners
- Strong potential for program sustainability
- Commitment to collaborating with other community organizations and institutions, including other national service programs
- Well-defined roles for members in enhancing the capacity of partnering organizations leading to measurable outcomes or impact

### **Organizational Capability (25 Percent)**

- Ability of legal applicant to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight
- Sound track record of accomplishment as a partnership, particularly in the proposed activity areas
- Well-defined roles for staff and administrators
- Ability of program partnership to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight
- Well-designed plan or systems for self-assessment, evaluation, and continuous improvement

### **Cost Effectiveness/Budget Adequacy (25 Percent)**

- Partnership plans for securing diverse funding sources, i.e., non-federal support, for program implementation and sustainability beyond minimum requirements
- Demonstration of decreased reliance on federal resources, including competitive cost per MSY





- Adequate budget to support program design

The bullets under each heading describe the elements that should be included in your program narrative. Program Design includes three subcategories and represents 50 percent of the basis used to evaluate and select each program. The subcategories of *Needs and Service Activities*, *Member Development*, and *Strengthening Communities* are related and are therefore grouped in a single Program Design criterion.

## **ADDITIONAL FEDERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Overall, the Corporation seeks a grant portfolio of programs that utilizes a wide range of program designs and approaches to community service that meet various community needs. In addition, the Corporation will consider the following items in making final selections via the national competition:

### *Program Models*

- Programs operated by community organizations, including faith-based organizations, or programs that support the efforts of community organizations, including faith-based organizations, to solve local problems; and,
- Professional Corps programs.

### *Program Activities*

- Programs that serve or involve children and youth, including mentoring of disadvantaged youth and children of prisoners;
- Program that address educational needs, including those that carry out literacy and tutoring activities generally, and those that focus on reading for children in the third grade or younger;
- Programs that focus on homeland security activities that support and promote public safety, public health, and preparedness for any emergency, national or man-made;
- Programs that address issues relating to the environment;
- Programs that support independent living for seniors or individuals with disabilities;
- Programs that increase service and service-learning on higher education campuses in partnership with their surrounding communities;
- Programs that foster opportunities for Americans born in the post-World War II baby boom to serve and volunteer in their communities; and,
- Programs that involve community-development by finding and using local resources, and the capacities, skills, and assets of lower-income people and their community, to rejuvenate their local economy, strengthen public and private investments in the community, and help rebuild civil society.

### *Programs Supporting Distressed Communities*

- Communities designated as an empowerment zone or redevelopment area, targeted for special economic incentives, or otherwise identifiable as having high concentrations of low-income people;
- An area that is environmentally distressed, as demonstrated by federal and state data;
- An area adversely affected by federal actions related to managing federal lands that result in significant regional job losses and economic dislocation;
- An area adversely affected by reductions in defense spending or the closure or realignment of a military installation;
- An area that has an unemployment rate greater than the national average unemployment for the most recent 12 months for which state or federal data are available;
- A rural community, as demonstrated by federal and state data; and,



- A severely economically distressed community, as demonstrated by federal and state data.

#### *Other Programs*

- Programs that meet additional priorities as the Corporation determines and disseminates in advance of the selection process.

### **FEDERAL DOCUMENT REVIEW**

The Corporation may review the following items in conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds:

- Any data previously submitted to the Corporation, including progress reports, site visit reports, financial status reports, audits, HHS Account Payment Data Reports, timeliness of past reporting, etc.
- Program evaluations;
- Member-related information from the Corporation's systems;
- Other Corporation internal information, including information from the Office of the Inspector General;
- IRS Tax Form 990;
- An applicant organization's annual report;
- Information relating to the applicant's financial management from Corporation records;
- Member satisfaction indicators; and,
- Publicly available information including demographic data for the area to be served, the applicant organization's website, etc.



# APPENDIX A – SMALL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (SECULAR AND FAITH-BASED)

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## OVERVIEW

Through its range of grant programs, CSC has observed that many small organizations – both secular and faith-based – provide a range of valuable services in their local communities. Unfortunately, government grant accounting, reporting and evaluation requirements demand an infrastructure and level of administrative capacity that often precludes smaller organizations from administering public funding. It is CSC's intention to make AmeriCorps resources more accessible to small community organizations that may have little or no experience with government grants. Small community organizations with the capacity to administer public funds are certainly classified as eligible legal applicants. However, small community organizations can also benefit from AmeriCorps program roles such as member service site, source of volunteers, beneficiary of volunteer projects, etc.

## FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

A general guideline for faith-based organizations receiving AmeriCorps funds is that AmeriCorps members cannot proselytize or engage in any religious activity while they are officially engaged in their service activities. Thus, AmeriCorps tutors serving at a faith-based organization could work with students in schools, but could not attempt to encourage them to attend religious services. Applicants are also advised that AmeriCorps funds are not covered under Charitable Choice provisions.

## RESOURCES

Community organizations throughout California have access to a network of nonprofit support centers and community foundations.

- Statewide, 14 nonprofit support centers provide workshops in nonprofit management and fundraising, assistance with information and referrals to other community resources. Locations and additional information can be found at <http://www.c-map.org>.
- There are more than 20 California community foundations that provide support to local organizations. All community foundations provide grants, while some also provide referrals to other sources of funding. More information on community foundations can be found at [www.lccf.org](http://www.lccf.org)

The University of Southern California's Center for Religion and Civic Culture has produced products that may be of interest to FBOs. The Center's publications include *Increasing Your Congregation's Capacity to Offer Publicly-Funded Human Service Programs*, as well as a number of guides with useful advice on grantwriting and preparing proposals. The Center's website ([www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/religion\\_online/index.html](http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/religion_online/index.html)) also contains links to other organizations of interest to faith-based organizations.

CNCS has produced a resource for AmeriCorps applicants seeking to involve community organizations in their programs. The resource is available at [www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/faces/toolkit\\_for\\_ameriCorps\\_applicants\\_faces/index.php](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/initiatives/faces/toolkit_for_ameriCorps_applicants_faces/index.php)



## APPENDIX B – PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

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### OVERVIEW

Performance measurement is the art and science of assessing how well an organization is achieving its goals. By examining the ways in which programs are “getting things done,” performance measurement empowers key stakeholders, strengthens AmeriCorps, and helps to maximize programs’ benefits to communities and participants. To this end, the Corporation and CSC are placing increased emphasis on use of performance measures as program management tools and as means to communicate program impacts.

### PROGRAM DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Creating performance measures is an important part of program design. Applicants should:

- think through each of the different activities AmeriCorps members will engage in;
- identify the likely impact or change that will result from those activities; and,
- determine how to best measure those results.

While performance measures provide good indicators of progress toward program goals, defining these measures is just one aspect of program design. Performance measurement is most useful as part of a larger process of program planning.

### CHOOSING AND REPORTING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Once you determine your program activities and define how to track your progress, you will choose which measures you want to report to the Corporation and CSC per the requirements outlined in the RFA. After you have chosen the aspects of your program that you wish to report on, the Performance Measurement Worksheets (included in the *Application Forms and Instructions*) will help you flesh out each measure.

Successful applicants consider these components early in the application process, as experience indicates that well-constructed performance measures are essential to a quality application. To develop performance measures, the Performance Measurement Worksheets require you to describe:

- The result you expect to achieve;
- How you will achieve this result;
- The data and instruments you will use to measure this result; and,
- The targets you intend to meet for each measure.



## RESOURCES

Project STAR, the Corporation's technical assistance provider on performance measurement, provides numerous resources including, performance measurement toolkits, training events at state and national conferences, and online training materials. Please see Project STAR's website at [www.projectstar.org](http://www.projectstar.org) and their "Performance Measurement Toolkit" at

[http://nationalservicerresources.org/resources/online\\_pubs/perf\\_meas/pmtoolkit.php](http://nationalservicerresources.org/resources/online_pubs/perf_meas/pmtoolkit.php).



## APPENDIX C – EVALUATION

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### OVERVIEW

Performance measurement and evaluation are related but distinct. By using both of these data collection methods, programs can most effectively understand their work and their progress.

Performance measures are designed to capture ongoing progress towards meeting program objectives. These ongoing program performance assessments should be supplemented with more in-depth, rigorous evaluations that isolate the *particular impacts* of national and community service programs. Evaluation refers to an analytic study providing an overall picture of the results that can be attributed directly to program activities. Specifically, evaluations compare the difference between the outcomes for individuals participating in a program to the outcomes for similar individuals not participating in a program.

### DESIGNING AN EVALUATION

In completing evaluations, the Corporation recognizes that different applicants will face different challenges and bring different resources to the table. To allow programs flexibility in addressing these issues, the Corporation does not prescribe a single methodology for evaluation. Instead, the Corporation has identified a broader set of guidelines based on generally accepted research standards. Evaluations should include:

- rigorous, systematic, and objective research methods;
- procedures to collect reliable and valid data relevant to activities and programs;
- experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals or programs are compared utilizing appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random assignment experiments;
- procedures to control for the influence of other factors through the use of control or comparison groups so that any changes in outcomes can be attributed to participation in the program; and,
- methods presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings.

These efforts should include engaging an evaluator with expertise in scientifically-based research methods at the beginning of the program year. Although evaluations are most often conducted by an independent researcher, there may be evaluation approaches that meet the standards described above without the use of an outside evaluator.

In planning for a rigorous, scientifically-based study of program outcomes, it is important to determine an appropriate scope of the activities to be evaluated. Evaluations are intended to investigate program effectiveness as broadly as possible. But if your program includes a wide range of distinct service activities, you should select activities for rigorous evaluation that best reflect the overall mission of the program and the service activities carried out.



## RESOURCES

There are a number of resources available to assist you as you begin to think about your program evaluation:

- Project Star has created a User's Guide to Evaluation for National Service Programs, available at [www.projectstar.org/star/Library/toolkit.html](http://www.projectstar.org/star/Library/toolkit.html).
- The United Way of America provides an overview of outcome-based evaluation at [www.unitedway.org/outcomes](http://www.unitedway.org/outcomes).

Local resources can be helpful for program applicants in responding to the evaluation section of the application. Suggested institutions to contact for assistance include universities/colleges, research firms, or other community organizations that may be using a local resource for their performance measurement and evaluations.

Keep in mind that choosing the "right" local resource that will meet your needs is critical. Identify the specific tasks you would like the local resource to assist you with (e.g., instrument development, data analysis). You should stay involved in the evaluation process throughout your program year. In other words, don't pass the entire task of evaluation to your local resource. You may not get what you need in the end.

The cost of having the local resource assist you is another issue to bear in mind. The cost will depend on the amount of effort you would like the local resource to assume. The more involved you are in your evaluation, the less your local resource will need to do, reducing costs. For a discussion of budgeting and planning for evaluation, see the *W. K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Toolkit* available at <http://www.wkkf.org/default.aspx?tabid=75&CID=281&NID=61&LanguageID=0>.





## APPENDIX D – VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

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### OVERVIEW

Effective involvement of volunteers will vary among AmeriCorps programs, depending upon the nature of the service activities and the partnership's capacity to utilize and sustain the efforts of community volunteers.

### FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING YOUR VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT COMPONENT

In determining how volunteer recruitment will support the overall mission of the program, applicants should assess their ability to run a volunteer program by considering:

- the level of volunteering that is needed for the program, including the number of volunteers, the number of hours of service for volunteers, whether volunteers will serve on a one-time or recurring basis, and the frequency of volunteer service required;
- what volunteer skills and experiences are needed to make the program successful (developing volunteer job descriptions and clearly stated goals and objectives for the volunteers can assist in making these determinations);
- whether the recruitment strategy is feasible and strives to achieve broad representation from the community, including making materials accessible to audiences from different languages and backgrounds; and,
- how applicants will provide the support necessary for volunteers to develop different and/or higher levels of volunteer responsibility and grow in their personal capacity.

### IMPLEMENTING THE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT COMPONENT

The Volunteer Centers of California describe six keys important in recruiting and supporting volunteers. These six keys include:

- *Value Volunteers*
  - Identify and value the contributions volunteers can make
  - Delineate between staff and volunteer roles
  - Change the agency infrastructure to reflect a belief in volunteerism
- *Recruitment and Marketing*
  - Develop volunteer position descriptions, including tasks to be completed, number of hours/frequency, essential qualifications, etc.
  - Identify target audiences for recruitment based on needs of volunteer positions
  - Describe the organization where volunteer will be placed and the impact the volunteer will have
- *Selection and Placement*
  - Interview volunteers and place with the same care as paid staff
  - Match volunteer interests and available time with needs of organization



- *Orientation and Training*
  - Provide the volunteer with adequate orientation and training, including introductions to key staff, agency norms, and minimum expectations
- *Ongoing Support and Retention*
  - Provide volunteers with the same respect you would other agency staff, including providing information regarding upcoming agency events
  - Provide volunteers with additional opportunities and/or training depending on their interests and agency needs
  - Assign a supervisor and provide feedback
- *Recognize Volunteers*
  - Plan recognition events for volunteers
  - Provide formal recognition through such programs as the President's Volunteer Service Award program and/or the California Governor and First Lady's Service Award program.

### **CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEER MATCHING NETWORK (CVMN)**

The California Volunteer Matching Network (CVMN) will utilize technology and the expertise of volunteer connector organizations, such as Volunteer Centers, to more effectively connect Californians to volunteer opportunities in their local communities. Over the past two years, CSC has been leading a development effort in partnership with Volunteer Centers, nonprofit organizations, and others that will lead to the launch of the CVMN on September 26, 2006.

As part of its launch, the California Volunteer Matching Network will include the following components:

- A brand new website ([www.californiavolunteers.org](http://www.californiavolunteers.org)) that will be developed and maintained by CSC and will include interactive content to encourage Californians to volunteer;
- A searchable database of quality-assured volunteer opportunities accessed through the new website;
- A network of Hub organizations (Volunteer Centers, Hands on Affiliates, etc.) that provide customer service to potential volunteers as well as nonprofit organizations posting volunteer opportunities;
- Capacity to connect spontaneous volunteers generated in times of disaster with the relief and recovery organizations that need them; and,
- A statewide and coordinated local marketing campaign that drives visitors to the new website.

The CVMN will be comprised of both a statewide and local presence. A statewide marketing campaign, developed by CSC in coordination with key local partners, will drive potential volunteers to the new website. Once there, they will search for volunteer opportunities based on their interest and geographic location. In addition, they will be provided information regarding their local Hub organizations and how to contact them for additional assistance.

Local nonprofit organizations and public entities with volunteer needs are encouraged to connect with local Hub organizations. In doing so, organizations will be able to post volunteer opportunities into the statewide system and take advantage of the marketing campaign that will promote the website in the coming months. In addition, the Hub organization will be able to promote volunteer opportunities locally, providing additional exposure.



## RESOURCES

A number of California and national resources can assist you in designing and implementing your volunteer recruitment and support component. These organizations include:

- The California Association of Volunteer Centers, and its member volunteer centers, can provide numerous resources, in-person training, and recruitment/placement relationships. To find the local volunteer center nearest you, visit <http://volunteercentersca.org>.
- The Points of Light Foundation supports the national volunteer center network and provides many resources through its website: [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org).
- The national United Way and its affiliates throughout the country support community organizations through fundraising, volunteer referral, and advocacy. To find your local United Way, visit: [www.unitedway.org](http://www.unitedway.org).



## APPENDIX E – SERVICE-LEARNING

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### DEFINITION

Service-learning is an instructional reform strategy which actively involves youth in academic programs through service to their communities. The term “service-learning” means a method under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that:

- is conducted in and meets the needs of a community;
- is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community; and helps foster civic responsibility;
- is integrated into and enhances the core academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and,
- provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience.

### EXAMPLES OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Students and teachers have opportunities throughout the activities and at the end to reflect on their service-learning experiences.

*Elementary:* Fourth-grade students, some of whom are reading below grade level, buddy with first graders for one-on-one reading. The fourth-grade teacher instructs her students in several simple reading strategies, such as picture cues and letter-sound correspondence. The fourth graders must select age-appropriate books that are of interest to their “buddy,” practice reading the book in an interesting way, and define vocabulary words that may be difficult for the younger child. The students meet weekly for their Book Buddy sessions.

*Middle Grades:* Middle school students work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to conduct an in-depth study of a nearby watershed as part of their science curriculum. The students identify what constitutes a healthy watershed, and with the help of the teachers and volunteer biologists, hydrologists, and environmental engineers, design a rehabilitation plan to restore degraded areas of the watershed. In their language arts classes, students develop articles and public service announcements to educate the greater community and highlight the importance of environmental sensitivity.

*High School:* Students in advanced Spanish courses practice second-language acquisition, writing, and speaking skills while volunteering at local health care facilities and human service agencies that primarily serve Spanish-speaking clients. Students serve as translators and assist clients by helping them complete registration forms and by providing instructions and information related to their care and treatment.

*College and University:* A California State University (CSU) faculty member coordinates a licensed preschool for homeless children. The school provides clothing, parenting classes and health care services free of charge. CSU students enrolled in child development courses use their knowledge of social development to design educational activities that benefit children who attend the preschool.

*AmeriCorps:* AmeriCorps members in a school-based tutoring program sponsored by a county office of education promote, plan and develop service-learning in middle schools. As part of the program’s



volunteer component, a small team of members develops community partnerships at the school and district level. They make presentations to community groups, assess the needs of community organizations, facilitate contact with teachers and provide technical assistance to teachers planning their projects. Other members serving in the afterschool program lead students in campus-based service-learning projects and other activities.

## RESOURCES

Service-learning resources that may be useful to applicants include:

- The *California Department of Education's CalServe Initiative* website ([www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/si](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/si)) contains an overview of CalServe-funded Learn and Serve K-12 school-based programs, tools, research and links to regional networks of service-learning specialists.
- The website of the Office of Community Service-Learning at the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's Office contains information on academic service-learning, research and publications, program summaries and links to service-learning programs throughout the CSU system. More information can be found at [www.calstate.edu/csl](http://www.calstate.edu/csl).
- The Learn and Serve America website ([www.learnandserve.gov](http://www.learnandserve.gov)) provides an overview of Corporation-funded service-learning programs for K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and community-based organizations, as well as tools and resources.
- The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse supports the service-learning community in higher education, kindergarten through grade twelve, community-based initiatives and tribal programs, as well as all others interested in strengthening schools and communities using service-learning techniques and methodologies. More information can be found at [www.servicelearning.org/index.php](http://www.servicelearning.org/index.php).

